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STATESMAN

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 of women
 who kill

'CRISIS? WHAT CRISIS?'

Paul Hirst
 on the
 UK economy



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Spring Books issue: with publishers' predictions, Terry Eagleton, Elizabeth Wilson, Adrienne Blue. Plus "If it works we call it socialism; if it doesn't we say it's capitalism": Jonathan Mirsky on the end of Chinese Marxism

A call to rowdyism

MR NIGEL LAWSON's fifth Budget must go down as one of the nastiest and most regressive pieces of government action since the second world war. At a time when up to 60 per cent of welfare claimants face cuts in the real value of benefit (through the changes in housing benefit and the administration of the euphemistically named "Social Fund", the better off in our society are offered the further sweetener of a cut of a third in their top rate of tax.



The rich and higher-income earners had already done very nicely under the New Economic Liberalism — or Thatcherism for short. All constraints on their pay awards had long since been abandoned: top rates of tax had already come down significantly; stock options and the perks industry (especially pensions) had further enriched them. Official statistics had confirmed that the trend of the distribution of income had been altered firmly in favour of the top 20 per cent of our society — and especially of the top 5 per cent.

But by comparison with what Nigel Lawson has just done, that was only fooling around at the margins. His Budget means that we now have a £200m social fund for the poorest fifth of our society, and a £2bn "Society Fund" for the top 5 per cent. The arrogance of it all is breathtaking. And although it was regrettable that the immediate reply of Neil Kinnock to the Budget speech was delayed on Tuesday afternoon by rowdyism in the House, it has to be said that, in the light of what the Budget did and did not contain, that rowdyism was thoroughly understandable — and there is likely to be a lot worse to come.

"You watch" had been the cry of the Lawson camp. "Nigel is no respecter of persons, and will combine his tax cuts with major assaults on tax privileges." In the event, neither the attack on forestry loopholes, nor the changes in taxation on company cars, adds up to very much. Even the much vaunted separation of a husband's and a wife's income actually helps the rich further, via its impact on investment incomes. (And somehow, incidentally, the married man's allowance remains.) In the event mortgage relief was not reduced to the standard rate. Most noticeable of all, while buying some aspects of the package of "tax reforms" offered to him by academics — such as Professor Mervyn King's (of the London School of Economics) advocacy of only two tax rates, at 25 per cent and 40 per cent — the Chancellor quietly declined the *quid pro quo*: Professor King's suggestion that this should be accompanied by

abolishing the ceiling on National Insurance, so that the effective marginal rate would have been 49 per cent (40 per cent income tax plus 9 per cent National Insurance).

And, just in case the well off are losing sleep because their heirs may not come into it all, further reductions in inheritance taxes have been made, so that even the redistribution of income that cannot possibly af-

fect the incentive of its earners is ruled out.

Indeed, the "incentive" aspects of this Budget are very strange indeed. Despite all its attempts to commission economic studies to justify higher-rate tax cuts, the Treasury has failed to prove they are economically necessary. Any incentive effects are likely to be outweighed by the disincentive effect — with even more money in the bank, why should you work harder? As for the "dependency society", we are fast heading back to the recreation of a "leisure class" which — at the upper end of the scale — will have no incentive to work at all.

The government attempts to justify its appalling insensitivity towards spending on the National Health Service in general and the poor in particular by arguing that spending decisions are taken in the autumn, and revenue ones in the spring. Leaving aside the dubious wisdom of such staggered budgeting, there is a strong suspicion that the Chancellor presented misleading revenue figures to the Cabinet when the spending decisions were made, and deliberately left himself with more tax revenue than he admitted.

But it is not only the social injustice of the Budget that is disturbing: the economic judgement behind it also leaves much to be desired. (see Paul Hirst, p10). Talk of economic transformation sits ill with the reality of a manufacturing sector which, for all the blood-letting, still cannot pay its way in the world (although it is very good at paying itself).

If the economic picture were as rosy as the Chancellor fancifully paints it, we should not have seen such a major policy split as has recently occurred between him and his Prime Minister over the exchange rate. On this the Budget had precious little to say.

The government in this Budget had the chance, awash with revenue as it was, to begin to spread the fruits of its claimed economic success, and to heal the wounds suffered en route to the "enterprise society". It has chosen to ignore the opportunity in a most insensitive and brutal manner. This was the unkindest tax cut of all. □

DIARY

On the Sunday after next, clocks go forward by one hour and we emerge from 22 gloomy weeks of the aptly-named Greenwich Mean Time. But soon, I can reveal, we may escape GMT for good. This is thanks to a crusade waged by Dr Meyer Hillman of the Policy Studies Institute. He argues that we should have Summer Time in the winter and Double Summer Time in the summer; in other words, everything an hour later than it is now. This would at last bring us into synch with most of Western Europe (Portugal and Ireland being the only other offenders). We would have lighter evenings. There would be music in the cafes at dusk and bougainvillaea on every wall. Cicadas would serenade us as we strolled in the twilight. . .

The Home Office thought Hillman something of a crank at first. But now the government has until the end of the year to tell the European Commission what it will do about "harmonising" the date when summer-time ends with other member states. And suddenly his suggestion is one of the two front-runners in Whitehall. (The other, inevitably, is to do nothing.) Hillman scents victory. The change could come as soon as autumn 1989. Bad light need never stop play again.

For the past three weeks something called "The Tournament of the Mind" — a long series of IQ questions set by the right-wing group Mensa — has been trundling through the pages of *The Times*. I shan't be entering, however, as I am still puzzling over a challenge from the first week: "Using every letter of the following sentence once only, find three words closely associated with *The Times*. EACH SWAN WENT IN FREE." The obvious answer — SPAVINED REACTIONARY DRIVEL — just doesn't fit the letters. Can anyone assist?

Now that theatres and arts groups are being encouraged to seek business sponsorship, you might think they would inspect a company's CV before accepting its money. Nicholas Snowman, General Director (Arts) of the South Bank Centre — which includes the National Theatre and the Royal Festival Hall — apparently thinks otherwise. He has organised a 12-week festival called End Games which will celebrate artists' "late work" and for which he has persuaded British and Commonwealth Holdings plc to shell out £150,000. Indeed British and Commonwealth is so keen that it has promised the same sum annually for the next five years, plus extra sponsorship for particular events. Snowman pays handsome tribute to the corporation in his festival programme; he is "most encouraged by their willingness to join us in further adventures over the next five years".

British and Commonwealth's commercial adventures include extensive and increasing interests in South Africa and Namibia, with a turnover of £30.4 million there last year. The company runs a joint business with the owners of "Sun City" in Bophuthatswana. And it owns the grand Mount Nelson Hotel in Cape Town, which was revealed last year to be underpaying its Coloured staff. I asked Nicholas Snowman if he didn't anticipate trouble. "No. Why?" Well, presumably he was aware of the South African connection? "No, I

know nothing about that." He turned to ask a colleague, who also knew nothing. With £150,000 a year to show for it, ignorance is bliss.

Michael Heseltine's letter to Nicholas Ridley last week, about the "self-evident ravages" that developers' "extravagant endeavours" are causing to the countryside of south England, is full of surprises. For one thing he suggests that developers should pay the whole cost of planning appeals, including objectors' expenses. For another, I don't seem to remember Heseltine making such apocalyptic noises when, as Environment Secretary, he was in a position to stop these developments.

But what really puzzles me about the letter is this. Heseltine and Ridley have worked together and known each other for many years. Heseltine begins: "Dear Mr Ridley. . ." Are they really not on first-name terms yet?

There is a rally against the Alton Bill in London this Saturday. I hope someone there will mention the Parliamentary Labour Party's feeble performance on the subject. What, for instance, does Roy Hattersley (who abstained on the Second Reading) think of the Bill? If you write to ask him, you will be sent a letter of blithering pusillanimity which tells you that Roy regards it as a grave moral issue, not a matter for sloganising, no easy answers and so on. *But what about the Bill?* A group of women

ROGER WODDIS

Mission Accomplished

"Mrs Thatcher and Mr Lawson remain at one in seeing their mission as to help the well-off to help themselves."
— William Keegan in the Observer

"What will you off them, Nigel, dear Nigel? What are the daring reforms in your box? Are you proposing to clobber the punters? Will it be levies on bangers and socks?"
"No, I have other suggestions, Your Greatness, Radical wheezes for cutting the tax; I shall work miracles, Ma'am, for the people, All they desire, except get off their backs."

"That sounds most promising, Nigel, dear Nigel; Sill, on the basics we still disagree, Such as inflation, exchange rates and sterling. Are you, dear Chancellor, challenging me?"
"Heaven forbid I should question your judgment; No, that is not my intention, dear Prime. More than the evils of drinking and smoking, Both us know being poor is the crime."

"What is far worse for my paranoid ego Is dealing with people who dare to say 'No'. If you've the balls to appear independent, Nigel, dear Nigel, you'll just have to go."
"We see eye to eye, Your Majestical Madness; Our mission is helping our friends on the make. As I made clear when I noshed for the cameras, If they can't afford bread, let the buggers eat cake."

turned up at his constituency surgery in Birmingham three weeks ago to beard him in his lair. "His attitude to women was diabolical," one of the women, Maureen Connolly, tells me. (Hattersley's assistant, David Hill, says in reply that the women's behaviour was "far from civilised".) According to Connolly, Hattersley revealed that he preferred things as they had been before the '67 Act. But what about the women who had gone to backstreet abortionists and been maimed or even killed? "That," he allegedly replied, "was their choice, wasn't it?" David Hill tells me he doesn't know what Hattersley said to the women. But he confirms that his boss isn't exactly girding up his loins for the struggle against Alton. "He hasn't decided what to do on the Third Reading. He's always found it difficult voting for abortion except in specific circumstances. He's going to make his mind up when the Bill emerges from committee." Roy Hattersley, lest we forget, is deputy leader of the Labour Party.

Since being grilled last week by a man from the *Stars and Stripes* newspaper — the "Authorised Unofficial Publication For the US Armed Forces" — I have started buying the thing. Its front page carries the cheery message "Good morning!" It has the usual glorious American by-lines: a staff writer on the financial page is called DeeDee Arrington Doke. An American friend tells me that when he was in the US Navy it was quite a scandal-sheet. These days, however, it is the epitome of sobriety — except for the letters column. Last Sunday's included a complaint from Seaman Michael S. Neutzling, stationed in Greece, that the proportion of women in the US military has grown from about 1 per cent in 1978 to more than 10 per cent today. "Feminism continues to gain ground," he grumbled, "while common sense and the 'traditional family' take yet another shot to the chin. Soon, if the feminists have their way, both will be on the mat for good . . . Somehow the military's recent 'Year of the Family' rings with a rather hypocritical note in the light of its alignment with feminist values." I'd never thought of the Pentagon as part of the feminist vanguard. But Seaman Neutzling is right. And he will be shocked to learn that a "Pentagon task force" on women has just recommended stricter quality control at military clubs, to banish "off-colour entertainment that is degrading and insulting to women". Defense Secretary Frank Carlucci has given the suggestion his blessing.

Perhaps the Pentagon could teach a thing or two to the male-infested British media. Monday's *Daily Telegraph* had a report on the government's difficulty in filling vacancies on the BBC's board of governors and the Broadcasting Standards Council. Its headline: "Men of Stature Shun Low-Pay Media Jobs". This reminded me of the evening-paper placard I saw near Piccadilly Circus when Michael Checkland was chosen as the BBC's director-general: MAN GETS BBC JOB. Surprise surprise.

Francis Wheen

Sweden's Irangate

SWEDISH GOVERNMENT officials are trying to play down public disclosures which clearly put the blame on the government and a state-owned industry for illegal weapons sales to Iran.

FFV (United Manufacturing Works) — a profitable, wholly-owned sub-division of the Swedish Department of Industry — has for years tried to blame its British licensee, Royal Ordnance Factories, for the sales.

But following the uncovering of damning evidence by the defence journal *Jane's* and reluctant Swedish police detectives, which included embargo-busting deals with South Africa, FFV and the minority-ruling Social Democrat government have been forced into embarrassing confessions.

Sweden had been previously rocked by embarrassing disclosures of deals between missile manufacturers Bofors and eager buyers in the Middle East.

In 1983, the then prime minister, Olof Palme was appointed by the United Nations to head an Iran/Iraq war conciliation effort which had met with virtually no success by the time Palme was gunned down in a Stockholm city street two years ago.

Iran had paid billions of dollars for Swedish-made weapons, ammunition and explosives, despite Sweden's existing unilateral embargo on the sale of arms to belligerent nations. Speculation has been rife that Palme's assassination was directly linked to his cancellation of the Iranian orders.

FFV spokesman Guy Engman says the government had been fully aware of all aspects of the deals entered into. He said the company was authorised by former Defence Minister Sven Andersson . . . who died last September. And the company had been granted export licences by the War Materials Inspector, Rear-Admiral Carl-Frederik Algernon . . . who fell, or was pushed, under the wheels of a Stockholm underground train in January last year.

Swedish Minister of Agriculture, Mats Hellstrom — who succeeded Andersson under Olof Palme at the MoD in 1982 — is still alive . . . but was removed from the MoD hot-seat at the height of disclosures on the Bofors affair early last year.

The latest FFV disclosures show that the company systematically sold weapons systems — including up to 40 per cent of Swedish FFV's total production of Carl Gustaf grenade launchers and ancillary equipment — directly to more than 50 countries, many of which were on the Swedish "banned" list, and to South Africa, in direct contravention of the mandatory 1977 UN embargo.

Initially FFV had claimed to have no control over the sales, saying Royal Ordnance, its production licensee in Britain, was to blame.

Opposition politicians in Stockholm are claiming the FFV ploy is a carbon-copy of the Bofors' excuses two years ago, when the Nobel chemicals subsidiary was discovered to have been selling hi-tech RB-70 missiles to Teheran amidst a flood of Swedish military equipment deals, including the sale of gunboats and assault craft. Bofors had to climb down on claims that the government of Singapore was to blame.

In Britain, Royal Ordnance executives say the company's position is clear. Going back 15 or 20

years when their factories were part of the (UK) Ministry of Defence, the company manufactured ammunition under licence for use with Swedish FFV Carl Gustaf recoil-less anti-tank weapons. The Swedes have continued to manufacture the weapons and ammunition. Royal Ordnance supplied the UK MoD's need for ammunition only.

Royal Ordnance spokesman Charles Carr, who has been appearing on Swedish TV and radio since the scandal began to unfurl ten days ago, said: "It appears FFV has been saying for some time that Royal Ordnance factories manufactured the weapon itself, but this is not true. It seems that FFV has been selling weapons to other parts of the world and constantly saying that Royal Ordnance has been manufacturing them. Well, that's not true. . ."

Royal Ordnance suspects it was being used by FFV as a cover for their own export operations. According to Charles Carr: "The difference between FFV and Bofors is that FFV is a state-owned company. That's why I think there's even more of a stink on this one."

Roy S. Carson

Shares can damage your wealth

THE CATALOGUE of woe suffered by the 60,000 individuals who own shares in the state-controlled Austin Rover provides a cautionary tale for those millions of people who became first-time shareowners by buying stock in newly privatised government assets like British Gas, British Airways, British Telecom et al.



The typical Austin Rover private shareholder is a widow in her late 70s, whose husband worked in one of the old vehicle manufacturers which were "rescued" by the government and became state-owned British Leyland (since renamed BL, now Austin Rover), who on his death left the shares to her as a nest-egg.

These investors had originally paid at least 45p a share, when the loose ends of the industry were pulled together in the private-sector British Leyland Morot Corporation in 1968. When the state took over in 1975, the government offered existing private shareholders 10p for each share, on the basis of one new share for every 10 of their old

ones. "Effectively the government bought the company-markets, plant, models, the Indian and Argentinian business, the whole thing — for £60 million," says Noel Falconer, who later set up the pressure group BLISS (British Leyland Individual Shareholders Society) to fight for justice for the 22 per cent of his fellow-shareholders who refused the government offer.

The story since then is not encouraging to those who go into business with the government. At that point, although no dividends were paid due to continuing losses, the private investors did own one fifth of the company. But when Britain entered the EEC, the Treaty of Rome imposed limitations on government subsidy for the car manufacturing industry. So the Department of Trade and Industry provided its funding under the guise of an equity injection, issuing 5,000 million new shares. As a result, the private sector's holding was reduced from one fifth to one fifth of one per cent, without compensation.

Noel Falconer sees the proposed sell-off of Austin Rover to British Aerospace as an opportunity to renew his fight for his fellow shareholders. "BL is not subject to the Ombudsman, or to an investigation by an appropriate House of Commons Select Committee. We could apply for inspectors to be sent in to investigate the DTI's actions, but this is at the discretion of the Board of Trade, which is part of the DTI."

"This proposal that British Aerospace should 'buy' Austin Rover is our opportunity to make a lot of noise. The companies will have to hold meetings to authorise any take-over. Those meetings will be rowdy. There's also a prima facie case of abuse to a minority, which we could take to court; and we will mobilise Euro MPs, and possibly appeal to the Court of Human Rights. That's presuming there's no reasonable offer for our shares. The 1975 price was £1 a share; at '88 prices you can multiply that by four. Then there's interest. A cash offer of £5 a share would be reasonable."

Even if £500 million government funding for a project dear to BAe's heart, the HOTAL (Horizontal Take-off and Landing space plane), is not involved on some quid pro quo basis in the Rover deal, the company can wipe out its Corporation Tax liabilities by taking on the ailing car makers with its £3 billion crude debt.

It is big business indeed: but at the opposite end of the scale, Noel Falconer has a dossier of cases like the old woman in Kent, left a number of BL shares in her husband's will, who became so distressed that the money was lost and there would be nothing to pass on to her children that she allowed herself to freeze to death in the winter of 1983/84. There are 60,000 more Austin Rover shareholders who believe they too have paid the price of being the government's guinea pigs.

Jane McLoughlin

NEW STATESMAN INDEX

The Index to Vol. 114 is now available, price £2.50 (incl. p&p). Send remittance to **New Statesman (Index), Foundation House, Perseverance Works, 38 Kingsland Road, London E2 8DQ.**

War by other means

IN A RECENT survey of articles printed in seven major US newspapers about the Arias Peace Plan for Central America, 329 were on Nicaragua, 40 on El Salvador, four on Honduras, two on Costa Rica, and none on Guatemala.

Press coverage has thus echoed the Reagan administration's priorities: to make the Plan stand or fall by Nicaragua's compliance. This has meant very little discussion of how the other signatories have failed to fulfil most of the requirements of the Plan — in marked contrast to the Sandinistas' record. Double standards are rampant. The pro-contra lobby demands Sandinista concessions on direct talks with the contras, press freedom, open activities of opposition politicians and "genuine amnesties", but fails to demand the same of Nicaragua's US-backed neighbours where the logic of counterinsurgency and army power still hold sway.

In Guatemala, where the Christian Democrat President, Vinicio Cerezo, is a key backer of the Peace Plan, the army still wields ultimate power. They have reversed Clausewitz's famous dictum and stated that "politics is a continuation of war by other means." In practice this means that, despite the new civilian government, they continue to carry out the bulk of "disappearances" and killings of opposition figures. In 1987 the body count of over 1,000 was higher than in the last year of military government, 1985. The risks are still too high for a human rights office to start functioning.

An amnesty for political prisoners, as called for by the Plan, is virtually meaningless in a country where the army seems incapable of taking prisoners alive. One round of talks between the government and guerrilla forces, known as the URNG, did take place last October in Madrid, but the army has vetoed further dialogue, insisting that the guerrillas give themselves up under an amnesty. Yet the track record of previous amnesties is extremely bad. This month the discovery of a clandestine cemetery in Chichicastenango revealed 23 to 30 skeletons of peasants who had accepted "amnesty" during the rule of General Rios Montt in 1983.

The Guatemalan press carries gruesome reports of some of the human rights violations, but rarely dares to point the finger at the security forces. In contrast, with the reopening of *La Prensa* and numerous other print and radio news outlets, "the Nicaraguan press is presenting news from a broader range of political perspectives than is available in El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala and even Costa Rica, the countries characterised by the Reagan Administration as democracies" (*New York Times* 3 February).

Honduras, the ultimate US client state, blatantly disregards the Arias Plan by refusing to curb contra activities on its soil. When right-wing death squads recently assassinated two witnesses who were about to give evidence in an unprecedented human rights trial before the Inter-American Court on Human Rights, the Reagan administration failed to denounce the killings — in contrast to the speed with which it jumped on recent cases where the Sandinistas treated opposition rallies roughly.

So far, the Reagan strategy has been to move the goalposts every time the Sandinistas make conces-

sions — and to step up CIA flights over Nicaragua in support of the contras. His "stick-and-stick" approach is hardly surprising — he has reportedly told advisors that he still wants President Ortega out by the time he leaves office next January.

James Painter

James Painter is the author of Guatemala: False Hope, False Freedom and (with Richard Lapper) Honduras: State for Sale both published by the Latin America Bureau.

'Creative' confusion

FOR TWO years Edgar Chamorro served on the Directorate of the FDN, one of the contra groups trying to overthrow the Sandinistas in Nicaragua, a post he had been invited onto by the CIA. Chamorro had impeccable credentials for it: four of his ancestors were US-backed presidents of Nicaragua and he had emigrated to Miami to escape the 1979 revolution.

In 1984 Chamorro left the FDN and last year he published a pamphlet: *Packaging the Contras: A Case of CIA Disinformation* in which he asserts:

We specialized in creatively confusing the general public, Congress and the press, by establishing groups parallel to those of the Sandinistas or of the US peace movement, creating human rights organisations, peace initiatives and the like, until no-one could be sure whose proposals were whose, or which organisations were artificial and which were real.

A West Germany-based group, The International Society for Human Rights, at first sight a neutral organisation along the lines of Amnesty, has now joined the tug-of-war for hearts and minds over Nicaragua. The organisers of Central America Week in Britain, a coalition of church, charity and solidarity groups, were surprised to find ISHR using the Central America Week logo in their newsletter — with a different office number and a very different message.

ISHR gained notoriety last year with a campaign to "Free the Swapo 100" whose objectives were not to free political prisoners locked up in South Africa, but those which ISHR say have been taken prisoner by SWAPO. Recognised as the sole representative of the Namibian people by the UN, SWAPO had previously announced that it had uncovered a 100-plus South African spy ring which had infiltrated its organisation.

A curious feature of ISHR material at the time was the use of the UN logo. The UN has sought legal advice on the possibility of suing ISHR but is having difficulty: the logo bears the added words "We Believe" — and "United Nations We Believe" is a registered group in the US.

British president Robert Chambers says the organisation has "unfortunately not managed to organise" events for Central America Week, but will be urging its members to attend those organised by CAW proper.

The organisation's budget — "£20-25,000 last year" — was provided by its German office, says Chambers. "We only have 200 members in Britain but we're expecting it to take off: the Germans have a £15 million budget and 180,000 members."

Jane Dibblin

Peace and the implementation of the Arias Plan is the theme of Central American Week from 16 March. For information about events around the country ring 01-631 5173.

One way to shut 'em up

UNTIL NOW, the United Kingdom Immigrants Advisory Service has weathered the chill winds of Thatcherism; which is a little surprising, given that it gets much of its money from the Home Office, despite devoting its energies to countering that department's illiberal instincts.

But its annual report, published last week, marks a deterioration in the fortunes of both the UKIAS and its clients. The Home Office is refusing to give it the money it needs to carry out its work, with the result that it now has a deficit of

If the caption fits

No 59



"With my right hand I give away millions of pounds to the deserving and, no doubt, *grateful* taxpayers; with my left hand, I make sure the government is no worse off. . ." Express your feelings of outrage at this blatant bribery by sending us suitable witty captions or speech/thinks bubbles, please, on a postcard to reach us no later than Friday 25 March. Ten-pound book token to the winner.

No 57: winner



Princess Di: "Look Charles, it's either me or the ozone layer." (*Nick Thomas, Bournemouth.*)

POLITICAL SKETCH

While Labour sleeps

Edward Pearce

FOR ONCE, if you will excuse me, *not* a sketch. Since Monday's business was Frank Dobson going through the motions of objecting to a guillotine only to be reminded by the Speaker that he had approved it on the preceding Friday, the topic should perhaps be competence. It should certainly be guillotines.

Procedure is not itself an inherently interesting subject. It appeals to its devotees much as motor cycle maintenance does to the buzzing repair man. There is a book called *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*, but *Erskine May* and *the Way of the Swami* may have to wait. However, the issue is looming and unless somebody in Labour's Whips' Office applies their mind pretty sharply there is a real prospect that the principal weapon of this and all oppositions will be lost for good. The weapon is delay and the man planning to destroy it is the amiable, if evangelical, Sir Peter Emery whose Procedure Committee favours modernity, fixed allocations of time to every clause according to its deserts and a neat slicing and wrapping of parliamentary time on committee, appropriate to a delicatessen counter.

It is doubtful that Sir Peter is being malicious or narrowly partisan. He has perhaps not seen the implications of what he is recommending. All oppositions must delay. They do so in order to win compromises in return for delivery of the bill. And even for those who suffer under Margaret Thatcher there are plenty of politicians on the Tory side who see themselves as doing a job rather than taking the cross. Little accommodations are still possible even today.

What is also possible is the questioning role of the House of Lords which, as those of us who haunt Westminster keep having to explain, has ceased to be a Tory echo chamber. Instead, it is the resort of Centrists, dissenting Conservatives and a small, proficient body of Labour peers whose Whip, Tom Ponsonby, could teach Labour in the Commons a thing or two.

If there has been delay, if someone has constructively wittered on about clause three sub section five as it affects the life chances of unmarried grandmothers in Sunderland, so that 12 other clauses remain undiscussed, the Lords has a splendid pretext for intervening and pulling forward amendments of its own. The effect is rather like Dora Copperfield's roast: charcoal on one side, bloody meat on the other. It is very easy at first sight to see the viewpoint of Sir Peter, all streamlined efficiency and every section neatly grilled at medium-to well-done. As cash-catering it is a splendid idea. In the circumstances of single-party domination with centralising tendencies, it is calamitous.

ONE WOULD expect Labour to have reacted. These are after all, proposals from a Select

Committee. They do not themselves have the predestined force of legislation. It is doubtful if the Tory managers could force them through.

The thinking of Mr Wakeham and his whips on this subject remains unknown. But a good Opposition Whips' Office, and even more so a floor leader who knew his job, would be raising every possible alarm. Now it may be the case that, through the Usual Channels, Mr Dobson is doing just this. But his flippant performances on specific guillotine motions do not suggest that he has understood what is happening. Almost certainly this is an issue for public as well as private opposition. The absence of the former suggests a sickening absence of the latter.

It is something of a tragedy for Labour that at a time when its front bench is beginning to cohere, when the performances of John Smith, Bryan Gould, Jack Cunningham, Gordon Brown, Robin Cook and Tony Blair have been sharp and professional, that its machine should be in such inadequate hands. Frank Dobson is an amiable fellow, but his dreary heartiness and insistence upon unobtrusive, personalised adversarialism came close to losing the Television debate single-handed. I have the strongest possible impression of a system of usual channels which is near to breaking down because Dobson does not understand the details.

Labour in the Commons is as good as the individual holders of portfolios. If you had a weak spokesperson upfront it would show quickly. A Chief Whip and their team, in no way the match for the skilled, seasoned and high-calibre group running the Tory machine, is less obvious. But its failures percolate through. The trouble is that in an anti-authoritarian party the roles of Floor Leader and Chief Whip, never mind the junior whip jobs, are less attractive. The Tories long ago got rid of the sort of crude disciplinarian whose only talent was to be a parliamentary drill corporal. They turned the Whips' Office into a channel for accelerated promotion, give or take one or two long-service elders. Consequently the job is done very well and the likes of John Major and Francis Maude pass through it.

Labour needs very badly to elect someone of the calibre of Jeff Rooker into the Chief Whips' office and to transfer an intelligent member of the shadow Cabinet who understands negotiation and concession into the shadow leadership of the House. As it is, the Emery proposals should be fought in the interests not of Labour, but of all oppositions now and in the future.

If Emery passes smoothly and indifferently into parliamentary practice, we shall have February and March guillotines appearing as a matter of course. No clause will ever be negotiable: the only threat an opposition can ever hold over government, its solitary pistol, will have become a toy shooter with a roll of caps; legislation will be peremptory and assured, the humps and problems of the executive cleared away. A procedure invented as a last resort measure by Gladstone to offset the Afghan raids of Parnell's Irish, will have become a species of automatic gear box. Resistance to the automatic timetable is so important that it is now the business of the Leader of the Labour Party himself. A public stand by Neil Kinnock would floodlight a proposal in danger of slinking into practice during the long sleep of those who should have seen it first. □

about £70,000. And the report is one of the most strongly critical of government that it has ever produced.

Entry Clearance Officers in the Indian Subcontinent, it says, "seem to start from the position of looking for reasons to refuse a visa and they often appear to base their decision on a set of stereotypes and generalisations". It cites some extraordinary recent decisions: a sports reporter from a reputable regional Bangladesh newspaper wasn't allowed to come to Britain to cover the England-Pakistan test series, a chess grandmaster was denied entry to play in an international tournament, and an Imam was banned from coming to Birmingham to officiate at a Mosque temporarily without its own Imam.

"Our relationship with HM Immigration is not consistently smooth," it says of some channel ports. "We are faced with long-established prejudices . . . which bode ill for new recruits maintaining their open-mindedness." It also highlights the shameful treatment of the 64 would-be Tamil refugees from Sri Lanka, who immigration officers tried to remove from Britain after interviews lasting, in some cases, only 10 or 20 minutes.

Jolyon Jenkins

Tebbitagram 'very horrifying'

IN A FIT of Tory high respectability, Norman Tebbit pointed to a photo printed in the *Sun* of Labour activist and ILEA teacher Mandy Mudd. The photo, taken during Mudd's stint as a stripagram four years ago was offered as material confirmation of Tebbit's criticisms of the soon-to-be-abolished ILEA. But Tebbit seems strangely unconcerned by the moral fibre of his supporters in the City, who keep institutions like Kissagram Ltd and its spin-offs in business.

"A lot of our clients are city gents," says Alan, manager of "Kissagram, Stripagrams". "We were sending three or four girls out at a time to office parties in the city — although business has been cut back a lot since the crash." Telegrams Unlimited, which takes both VISA and AMEX, lists employees in accountancy firms, banks, and stockbrokers offices like Wood Mackenzie and Phillips Drew among its clients. A management employee of one of Britain's leading companies recalls stripagrams as a regular feature of office parties, and described the "team photo diaries" of different stripagrams kept by some of her male colleagues.

In addition to the schoolgirls, nurses, and nuns on offer, these "greeting services" invariably feature "roly-polys" — fat women who may either strip, or jump on their "victim". "Very horrifying," says Phil, manager of Telegrams Unlimited. The *Sun*'s report on Mandy Mudd dwelled almost exclusively on her proportions; the caption beneath the photo read, "she danced like an elephant with its big ears flapping". The *Sun*'s jibe, like Tebbit's prim expression of distaste, suggests that Mudd's worst offense was her fat. The *Sun* depends on Page 3 photos for its sales, but Tebbit's letter employs the same opportunistic tactics to market Tory sexual hypocrisy.

Amy Gamerman

Kinnock goes for the Jonestown approach

LABOUR'S annual Scottish Party Conference last weekend was as dispiriting as its location — Perth, a small-minded, quintessentially conservative town with an appalling one-way system. Inside and outside the conference hall people wandered around looking unbearably miserable and totally lost.

The press, Labour's Shadow Scottish Secretary Donald Dewar told the conference, would be bound to talk of "division, disunity and splits" and ignore the great sense of purpose within the party. Indeed so, but only because there is in fact a great deal of division and not much sense of purpose.

The main cause for mass depression was one of the poorest speeches that the Labour leader Neil Kinnock can have ever given. In a lengthy passage on the health service, he never once referred to the rows of health service workers who packed the galleries, or the very distinctive problems that the service faces in Scotland. He hardly mentioned the one issue that he must have known was preoccupying most delegates to the point of obsession — the poll tax (although later on BBC radio he said that a non-payment campaign would be a fruitless distraction and that he would pay his poll tax). And he even pronounced Helen Liddell's name wrongly, in his generous tribute to her widely unpopular

reign as secretary of the Scottish Party.

He made no reference at all on the other issue inevitably uppermost in activists' minds — devolution. The omission provoked widespread criticism on the conference floor. When tackled about it on television he tried to dismiss the issue by remarking that he had not dealt with the environmental problems of the Himalayas either (which are, as it happens, very serious).

Most ill-judged of all, in this the first annual conference since the general election, he failed to congratulate the Scottish Party for its glorious victory north of the border. As one seasoned observer remarked, Neil Kinnock sounded more like a fraternal delegate from a foreign country than a party leader.

Another reason for misery was that the party managed to agree three mutually exclusive tactics for opposing the poll tax, which is due to be levied in Scotland from April next year.

The first motion to be passed was moved by the Transport and General Workers' Union and urged the party to "oppose the poll tax by all legal means possible". A second motion from the Association of Professional and Executive Staff (APEX) explicitly ruling out illegality and an executive committee statement definitely not ruling it out were both passed by the same large majorities.

The blame for the confusion lies with the TGWU who voted in favour of all three positions. The Scottish leadership was partially able to retrieve the situation by successfully directing most

media attention towards the party's new campaign to frustrate the setting up of the poll tax register next month by returning forms without filling them in.

In the Labour Party as elsewhere, despair provokes anger. In Perth the anger openly directed at the leadership — both Scottish and English — was fiercer than it has been for years. And, importantly, it was not just coming from the depleted ranks of the hard left, but from a new generation of soft left activists.

The frustration was most clearly expressed at the well-attended first meeting of Scottish Labour Action, a new internal party pressure group. Its two rallying calls — civil disobedience on the poll tax and more radical action in support of devolution — are clearly supported by a majority of constituency activists as well as some MPs. One member of the Shadow Cabinet present at the meeting, Robin Cook MP, announced that he supported the new organisation's aims ("personally I would not pay my poll tax") although he had doubts about the formation of yet another ginger group.

These new stirrings in the Scottish Party may hold the key to its long-term future. It can begin to assert its Scottish identity much more forcefully and establish itself as a more effective protector of Scotland's interests. Or it can kowtow to Kinnock, fall prey to the Scottish National Party and risk splitting into several pieces.

Rob Edwards

West Enders Weekly Friday March 18th 1988

IT'S TIME FOR ALL HONEST CITIZENS TO TURN TO CRIME.

© Steve Bell 1988



YOU CAN SEE WHY BY CONSIDERING A FEW FACTS

This Government has got more money than it knows what to do with. The reasons for this are simple. We're taking more money off more honest citizens than any Government in the History of Tax.



Not only that, we're also taking assets that honest citizens already own and selling them off to the first fat git that happens along with a chequebook. So you see, wardrobes full of zlotys don't come into it, not even trainloads of the stuff. We're talking about



GRAND CANYONS FULL OF MOON

We'll show you what we mean:

Each year car theft costs us £300 million and burglary sets us back another £150 million. That's fuck all to us. A fart in a hurricane. A pilchard pissing in the Pacific.

SO HOW DO WE MANAGE IT?

The truth is, like most criminals, we're on the lookout for a soft touch. We don't take it off the Rich. They make too much noise, they own too many newspapers, besides, we're all Rich Bastards ourselves. No. We take it off the poor.

BUT WHY STING THE POOR IF THE RICH HAVE ALL THE MONEY?

Because basically there are a lot more of them and they don't tend to complain.

They don't have the outlets, and if they do start getting stropky, it's usually by way of violent outbreaks by minority groups in run down areas, and we can always send the heavy Blue Boys into those sorts of places. Besides, the rich don't own all the money.

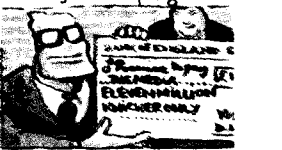
Well, not yet anyway.

BUT WHAT DO WE DO WITH ALL THIS MONEY?

What do we do? Quite simple: we keep it. We salt it away, somewhere discreet, somewhere

well out of reach of your grubby little fingers. And that's it. That's our story and we're sticking to it. Except for a couple of things.....

We do spend some money on you, the Great British Public. We spend money on Bombs for you, and we spend money on Campaigns of



BULLSHIT AND LIES

promoting Greed, Fear, Anxiety and thoroughly irrelevant Old Bollocks like 'Action for the Cities' and 'Practical Ways to Crack Crime'



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TORIES+CRIME
HOW DO THEY DO IT?



BEN PIMLOTT

Why pillorying morally defective Austrians misses the point

NOW THAT Anschluss weekend is over, Kurt Waldheim is enjoying a respite from the world's front pages. For the time being, accidental tragedy in Austria (the avalanches) has displaced the deliberate variety. But the issues surrounding Europe's most embarrassing post-war head of state remain unresolved.

There is no doubt that Waldheim should resign. More to the point, the Austrians and their leaders owe it to themselves to kick him out. There is not just the need for a bloodstained nation to proclaim the moral distance it wishes to keep between its modern identity and its past. There is also the matter of the cover-up. You are not guilty just because you know about something, Waldheim told a British television interviewer last week. Perhaps. But, even if knowledge of murder was the only accusation, no country can preserve its self-respect and retain in office a President whose publicly distributed curriculum vitae has been shown up as a tissue of lies.

Nevertheless there is a huge element of hypocrisy about the international hue-and-cry against the Austrian reptile. The righteous indignation of reactionary foreign governments — the USA and Britain in particular — is neither an edifying nor a convincing sight. A cynic would discern two motives: the acquisition of brownie points, especially among war veteran and Jewish voters, at zero cost; and an opportunity to stress once again what has been the West's most plausible defence, from Vietnam to Nicaragua: only the Nazis committed *real* atrocities.

So much has been said, written, filmed about the Nazis that it is time somebody looked for a change at the perverse nostalgia industry to which they have given rise. The continuing universal fascination with Adolf Hitler is partly because his regime was qualitatively worse than anything else in modern times. But it also has something to do with cultural proximity. When we peer into the blank, expressionless eyes and contemplate the neatly parted hair of members of an *Einsatzgruppe* murder squad, we know that every one of us furtively contains a potential stormtrooper.

Heaping calumny on Waldheim removes the need to consider too closely the conditions, in any society, that permit bureaucratised and officially-sanctioned outrages to occur. One role of the latter-day Nazi hunt has thus been to help to cloak Allied errors of judgment or of morality; another has been to obscure military and civil obscenities that still go on. In the Second World War there were the famous holocausts of enemy civilians, readily justified on strategic grounds at the time — Dresden, Hamburg, Berlin, Tokyo, Hiroshima, Nagasaki. There were also the nasty, unnoticed little decisions, some of which are only now beginning to emerge and many of which never will. The playwright William Douglas-Home recently drew attention to one significant incident, at Le Havre in 1944. Ordered to take part in an attack which he believed would cause unnecessary civilian deaths, he refused to do so. "We frequently told German officers to disobey illegal orders," he

says. "I thought it was time some of us did what we were telling them to do." Douglas-Home not only resisted an order: he wrote to the press explaining why. In Germany (or Russia) a firing squad would have been the inevitable result. In Britain, the penalty was a year's hard labour. Yet the interesting thing is how very, very seldom such protests were made.

Here is a point that applies almost as much in peace as in war. For the Nazi atrocity was not simply the product of military conflict. There is the uncomfortable historical problem of the non-Nazi public service. Why, in the early 1930s, did so many decent, ordinary dutiful bureaucrats not only do what they were told, but do it with enthusiasm? The key to the catastrophe is to be found as much in the behaviour of career civil servants, teachers, lawyers, academics and churchmen as in the doctrines of anti-Semitism. Dr Waldheim excuses himself today by rejecting the idea of collective guilt. Yet the accusation against him, as against many other minor cogs in peace and war, is of *individual* responsibility. Each faced a personal moral choice. Almost all ducked it.

‘Every time freedom of expression is suppressed in our courts, every time a member of the IRA is shot without trial, or an honest copper drummed out of the police force, we absolve ourselves by booting an elderly war criminal, and feel a lot better’

TO SUSTAIN such an indictment we need also to apply the argument to our own times. As Douglas-Home has pointed out, we cannot demand of others — under much greater extremity of pressure — that they should show moral (and physical) courage without imposing at least as high standards on ourselves. It will be objected that contemporary Britain offers no comparison with Nazi Germany and that it is naive, even bad taste, to imply otherwise. Yet that is precisely why the Waldheim dissection is so insidious. Every time freedom of expression is suppressed in our courts, every time a member of the IRA is shot without trial, or an honest copper is drummed out of the police force, we absolve ourselves by booting an elderly war criminal, and feel a lot better.

It is not necessary to be a conspiracy theorist, or to present (mainland) Britain as a police state, in order to be concerned at growing abuses of state power. It is not necessary to accuse Mrs Thatcher of Hitlerism to wonder why, so far, John Stalker has been the only individual to leave the government employ, on principle, over the shoot-to-kill affair. It is not necessary to place whoever gave the orders to execute unarmed suspects in Gibraltar

alongside the Gestapo, in order to feel patriotically ashamed at Britain's declining moral authority in Ireland and the world.

The truth is that the preservation of democracy entails constant vigilance in small things. Obsession with historic transgressions is not particularly helpful. A realisation that there is no clear dividing line between an everyday condonable abuse of authority and one that requires protest and sacrifice, is. As confrontation, discrimination, selfishness, outright oppression become government-approved virtues, so the unhappy choices facing public employees increase. It is impossible to know how often civil servants, in recent years, have stayed unhappily at their posts only because of a family to feed and an unpaid mortgage: but the incidence must have increased. For every Sarah Tisdall and Clive Ponting, who actually took action against behaviour they found to be repugnant, it is reasonable to imagine that there were dozens who wished they had the fortitude, but lacked it.

At any rate, it would be nice to think so. Alas, though civil service morale has notoriously plummeted under Mrs Thatcher, evidence of conscientious doubts is scarce. And that is another reason why pillorying morally defective central Europeans misses the point. For the reality is not, in such situations, that state servants suffer torments of secret regret. It is rather that they readily and unimaginatively accept the values of the dominant power. Hitler united his people in murderous hostility to the Jews. Mrs Thatcher has done an impressive job of uniting prosperous, modernising, mainly-Southern Britain into a self-interested coalition against the poor, the marginal, and the disadvantaged. Straight-talking callousness has become a point of pride: we live in a social Darwinian economic culture.

The historian Martin Gilbert has described how, after the Anschluss with Germany which many Austrians welcomed, the rights of Austrian Jews were swept away "and in their place the Jews suffered all the humiliations of a puerile and sadistic imagination". Nothing like that, of course, can be expected here. Yet history, as this century shows, moves at a cracking pace. The unemployed already have fewer rights than seemed conceivable a decade ago; there have been two elections at which the government benefited directly from its proudly-proclaimed negative redistribution. This administration, whose economic "success" was celebrated once again on Budget Day, and which remains so resoundingly popular, has drastically altered the parameters of the socially acceptable. When I was a child, beggars were people in nursery rhymes and story books. Today I step over them on my doorstep and dodge them daily in the Hogarthian city streets. Perhaps the next subject for investigation by an international commission should be the brutalising slippage of values which has accompanied this government's political triumph — and which, one day, will puzzle historians as much as Kurt Waldheim's India-rubber conscience. □

Crisis, what crisis?

Nigel Lawson has convinced everyone that Britain is newly prosperous. In fact, the country is in the middle of serious economic crisis. Our industrial decline is severe — and recent.

PAUL HIRST and JONATHAN ZEITLIN analyse it and suggest how it can be reversed

A TRIUMPHANT Chancellor rejoiced on Budget day that the economy is stronger than at any time since the war. His party insists that the British economy is enjoying unparalleled rates of growth and has finally broken out of a pattern of long-term decline which "consensus" governments over recent decades had allowed to continue. Astonishingly, they are expressing a consensus about "prosperity" which extends from Fleet Street to shoppers in the high street. Even the Labour Party feels the need to recognise and come to terms with "prosperity", to reach out to affluent workers in the south.

Yet Britain is in the middle of a serious economic crisis. Consider the facts highlighted on these pages. Conservatives talk much about "enterprise" and "industry". A word seldom on their lips is manufacturing — and Britain's continued economic crisis centres on the weakness of its manufacturing sector. Britain's industrial decline is both recent and very real. *Recent* — because until the late 1960s "decline" was debated as a problem of a declining relative share of world trade. By that standard, as a percentage of world output and trade, Britain has not merely "declined" relative to the 1950s, but has become insignificant. More successful economic policies could at best have slowed the pace of decline in this sense.

Real industrial decline began in the late 1960s with the loss by British producers of their share of the domestic market. This accelerated through the 1970s with the growth in trade in manufactured goods between the advanced industrial nations. This "de-industrialisation", the absolute loss of output and capacity across a broad range of industries, had no precedent. It is this decline that matters.

The UK industrial economy has not been declining in this sense since the 1880s. Between the wars, for example, it responded to sectoral failure and foreign competition threats by restructuring and adopting new products and processes as well as by increased tariff protection. A century of British "decline" is a convenient myth to hide the recent and widespread failure of British manufacturing.

Mrs Thatcher's economic policies in the period 1979-82, when an overvalued pound and high interest rates reinforced the effects of trade depression, led to the most concentrated loss of capacity and employment in British manufacturing since before the Second World War. Two million jobs in manufacturing have been lost since 1979 and manufacturing output is still 3 per cent below the level in 1973. From 1980 to 1985 there was actually

a negative net investment in manufacturing. Subsequent policy has done little to foster a recovery based on new investment and new products. On the contrary, the new "prosperity" is based on tilting the balance of national income heavily toward consumption rather than investment. Recovery after 1982 has depended on four major factors:

1. The pound fell against the dollar, not because of deliberate British policy but as an unintended consequence of regulating the dollar;
2. Public spending in Britain has been held down and households have benefited from lower taxes;
3. The government since 1983 has allowed consumer credit to grow unchecked (see Will Hutton on Lawson's boom, *NS* 22 January);
4. The government has done nothing to control private-sector wages which have increased more rapidly than the growth of productivity.

Britain faces a deteriorating balance of trade in manufacturing, leading to a balance of payments deficit even with North Sea oil at peak production

The result is a consumer boom based on tax cuts, credit and wage rises higher than the cost of living. British manufacturing firms that survived the 1979-82 crisis have benefited since from two factors — dollar sensitive exporters from a lower valued pound, and a general shift by manufacturers and retailers to shorter supply lines which favour home sourcing as against imports.

A "prosperous" economy in the present. But what happens in the near future? We know that a major determinant of the future is investment. It literally builds the future by the actions we take today. The disastrous collapse of investment in infrastructure (ie roads, railways, sewers, housing, etc) threatens the framework of an advanced industrial economy. The low level of industrial investment as a component of national income, by comparison with competitors like Japan or West Germany, has a cumulative effect on manufacturing.

Add to this the steady decline in the proportion of UK oil needs met from the North Sea that will begin in the latter 1990s and the consequent need for increased export income to meet energy needs. If we are currently facing balance of payments deficits, what will the position be like in the later 1990s? If the governments of that period try to meet this deficit by keeping up the value of the pound, then they will threaten manufacturing industry twice over by an overvalued currency and by the deterrent effects on investment of the high interest rates necessary to sustain it.

The Conservatives' indifference to manufactur-

ing investment as the core of a sustainable advanced industrial economy and their preference for political success based on short-term current consumption ought to be a national scandal. Unfortunately, it works by buying votes and rival political parties cannot ignore it.

However, if British manufacturing has not been continuously declining since the 1880s, it has certainly got into trouble since the early 1960s. Why? British firms turned increasingly towards mass production from the 1930s onwards with varying degrees of success.

Manufacturing in trouble

In the 1960s, government policy encouraged industrial concentration, building "national champions" out of mergers. Yet many of these merged firms were laid low by the import penetration of the 1970s. British Leyland is the classic example.

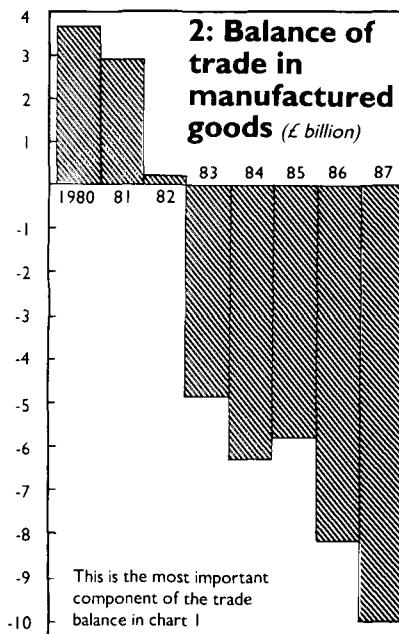
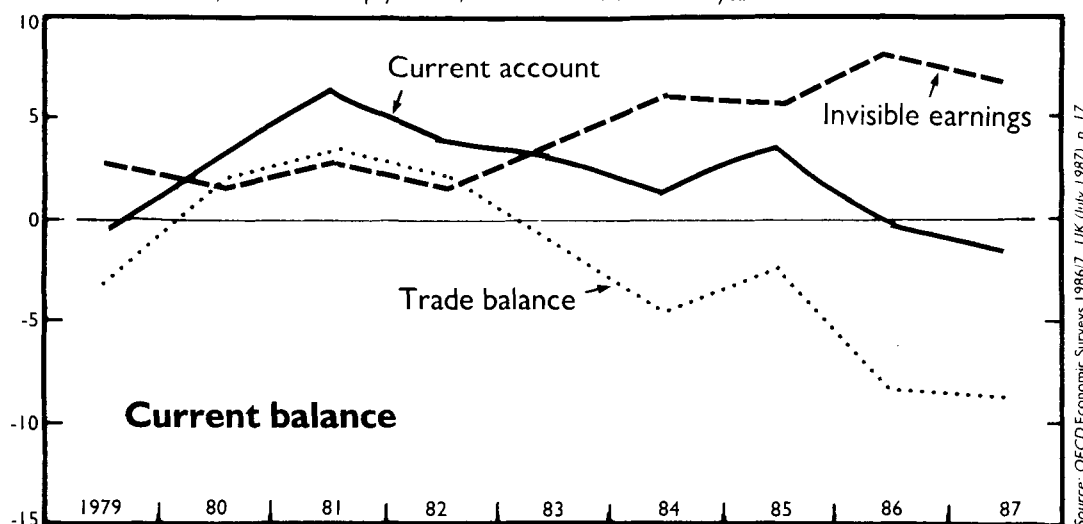
Britain has failed to anticipate or participate in a revolution in manufacturing organisation — the shift from mass production to "flexible specialisation". Mass production follows the logic of economies of scale, but only works if there is a mass market for standard goods. In a period of fragmenting and differentiated markets firms produce for changing demands on a world scale and must respond rapidly to competitors' product innovations. Mass production becomes more often than not a liability. Flexible specialisation uses broadly skilled and flexible labour to produce a varied range of models and product types from the same plant or shop. German, Italian and



False dreams of prosperity: Judy Garland and Fred Astaire sing "We're a couple of swells" in *Easter Parade* (1948). Cover montage by Michael Bennett

I: The balance of payments (£ billion)

The deficit in the trade balance (imports minus exports), plus the surplus in invisible earnings (insurance, banking) equals the current account balance, the "balance of payments", which went into the red this year.



Japanese firms have been most successful in adopting flexible specialisation strategies (even where they simply modify the working methods in mass production plants).¹

Why has British industry failed to adapt to changed market conditions and the changed production techniques that go with them? In the 1960s, most British firms catering for the mass market were absorbed in meeting domestic demand. They could sell all they could produce at home and often neglected export opportunities, unlike the West Germans or the Japanese.

Further, British management and government were dominated by a belief in the competitive advantages of large firms and the efficiency gains of economies of scale. But the bigger firms were too often aggregates of less-than-efficient plants — like British Leyland, for example. BL then committed itself to inflexible mass production techniques at Longbridge (home of the Metro line) at a time when foreign manufacturers were introducing flexible, multi-model lines.

In 1987, industrial output in Britain was barely higher than in 1979 and still below 1973 — Britain still has to "grow" more to get back to where it was

Industrial concentration also led to firms that are large multi-industry groups. For top management industrial concentration provides a strategy in itself. Successful firms respond to market conditions and expand by taking over other firms — another firm is a "second hand" investment in product capacity, it is often cheaper and less risky than internal investment in new capacity. Firms concentrate and rationalise to impede domestic competition and to sustain a given market share. Industrial concentration institutionalises manufacturing failure. It removes from top managers the need to make enterprises succeed by new investment. Managers actually involved in production become inferior beings without autonomy to innovate, and they're often at the mercy of the

top managers of the "acquiring" firm. They are, anyway, often badly trained, confined to narrow roles and rigidly differentiated from the manual workforce. Manual workers are in turn given narrowly specified tasks and have neither the skill, nor the encouragement to work flexibly. This rigid and hierarchical structure is a joint product of management and union attitudes and practices. It leads to a managerial and manual workforce which simply can't adopt the patterns of diffused authority, autonomy and responsibility that flexible specialisation demands.

Top managers are oriented toward balance sheets and stock market quotations. Industrial managers are ill-educated, provincial and culturally hidebound victims of a system of training and authority which could cope with mass production in a stable environment, but not with an international economy based on changing markets and products.

British policymakers believe in the virtues of "competition" to the exclusion of all else. The Conservative "strategy" for economic revitalisation is based upon the belief in the efficiency gains of unrestricted competition between firms in freed markets. But who is most effective in international competition? Not necessarily those who encourage cut-throat competition at home. Conservatives envisage only two entities — rational firms and efficient (because unregulated) markets. But it by no means follows that the isolation of the firm in purely competitive relationships really does stimulate efficiency.

In fact, Britain is a good example of the "dis-economics of competition" being inflicted on firms.

It is stupid to believe that many firms can bear the full costs of research and development, commercial information and market services, training and so on. What Britain singularly lacks is a "public sphere" for firms in industries and industrial regions, a set of institutions through which they can co-operate to mutual benefit as well as compete. Common services, the generalisation of best practice in the region or industry as a whole, mutual assistance between firms, co-operation to promote the collective upgrading of the skills of the labour force — all these elements of an industrial "public sphere" are almost non-existent in Britain. Yet they are strongly present among our more successful competitors.

They are also crucial to a manufacturing system based on flexible specialisation. For example, such a system needs sustained relationships of trust with vital sub-contractors, not the "screw them if they won't cut prices by 10p per unit" attitude so often found in big British firms.

Investment in Britain's infrastructure is disastrously low by our competitors' standards and falling (from 21.3 per cent of government spending in 1970 to 8.8 per cent in 1985)

The best framework for an industrial "public sphere" and the "economics of co-operation" between firms is the industrial region. Flexible specialisation is a strategy that appears to thrive in industrial districts, where flexibility within the firm is sustained by common services and assistance between firms. Britain used to have industrial districts such as one now finds in Emilia-Romagna in Italy or Baden-Württemberg in West Germany. Indeed, the term itself was coined by Alfred Marshall to describe areas such as Sheffield and South East Lancashire.

But they have been steadily destroyed by successive waves of mergers and government-sponsored concentration. Local autonomous firms became subsidiaries of national corporations. Slowly, the lack of autonomy and the centralising pull of corporate activities severed the local firms from others in their region. Again concentration has inhibited their flexible specialisation in Britain, in this case by obstructing the formation of regional networks of firms, public policies and new patterns of industrial ecology.

Deficient investment

Britain is thus an economy that has over-concentrated on mass production for given markets — and has even failed to do that well. The causes of industrial decline are recent, but they also

mean that traditional remedies for reversing economic decline are ineffective and obsolete.

Traditional Keynesian policies to stimulate effective demand can't cope with "de-industrialisation" and foreign import penetration. In an open and internationalised economy, stimulation of domestic demand may well give extra market share to foreign manufacturers. Our problem is less deficient consumption than deficient and inappropriate investment.

Traditional socialist advocacy of planning hardly offers an answer either. To work even moderately effectively large-scale planning requires stability and certainty. You cannot plan even on a small scale in conditions of uncertainty about the levels of world trade, rapid product changes and rapidly-shifting markets. Large-scale planning would only work for Britain if a protected domestic market could be created and serviced by planned mass production. Britain would have to depend far less on imports and, therefore, exports. Such a strategy would only work at the cost of economic backwardness and technological obsolescence. Britain would have to copy India.

But what about a British MITI? Some advocates of an active industrial policy favour planned investment on the model of Japan's Ministry of International Trade and Industry. They argue the MITI is responsible for the strategic direction of Japanese investment and that it "picks winners" from the product and industries of the future. Not only is this a rosy picture (MITI has also tried to pick lame ducks — for example, advocating competing with the US in civil aircraft production), but just imagine British civil servants doing it! The state lacks the competent personnel and the informal information networks with business so vital to the Japanese system.

The level, content and efficiency of use of investment in manufacturing is quite insufficient to secure Britain's future competitive position

Further, "picking winners" concentrates investment on a few major products. This is a high-risk strategy, utterly inappropriate to a country with a disastrous history of failure in government-sponsored investment schemes and a private management with a very poor track record on innovation. It also shares many of the defects of large-scale planning. Flexible specialisation is not best furthered by the top-down and centralised direction of investment, but by decentralisation and the promotion of autonomy.

So what should be the strategy for resolving industrial decline?

1. Only central government economic policies can redirect national income toward more investment. Keynesianism in this sense is not dead, but it does not follow that central government should have effective direction of that investment.

2. Be catholic about the industries and products in which investment may prove successful. Traditional sectors like clothing, footwear and furniture may be as viable as new high tech industries.

3. To find out where and in what to invest demands "intimate knowledge" of firms, processes and regions — the networks that provide that knowledge have to be built up through co-operation, information and bargaining between industry, labour and the state at national, industry and local levels.

4. Investment is probably best managed by "public/private" hybrid institutions which operate at keypoints in such networks.

5. Investment also involves the active collaboration of government and business in building up the "public sphere" for co-operative industry.

6. Industrial recovery cannot be built on the basis of a public policy of hostility to business, but on active collaboration between public and private institutions and people. Too often left and Labour interventions begin from just such a prejudice.

In brief, the main aim of the new politics of industrial renewal should be to try to create industrial districts, a "public sphere" for regions and industries, and collaborative networks. Industrial recovery cannot be driven through by state authority. It needs to be teased out of civil society by the state as a social leader, orchestrating collaboration, dialogue and bargaining.

This is the main lesson to be drawn from those open manufacturing economies that have consistently adapted national policy to match foreign competition and changing international circumstances. Austria and Sweden are the classic examples. The standard objection to such policies is that corporatism has already failed here; that income policy doesn't work in Britain because of the character of the trade unions and that Britain is just too large for such corporatist networks to function. But these objections are false. Britain does not have to slavishly copy Sweden. There is more than one way of orchestrating civil society.

Take Italy, for example. Italy is hardly a model for corporatist macro-economic policy. It has had weak and politically fragmented governments since the 1950s. In Italy, however, industrial regulation has not been national or corporate, but regional. The institutions and networks which make Italy's local economies work involve patterns of interest collaboration that often fall short of formal corporatism. In blind disregard for ideology, you can find Communist municipalities supporting and aiding unashamedly capitalist firms, as in Emilia, or Catholic entrepreneurs co-operating with radical trade unions, as in the Veneto. Britain needs to copy elements of the paths followed in both Sweden and Italy. Institutions of national corporate bargaining are weak in the UK and we do not have strong traditions of regional government.

Britain needs national policies which regulate industrial investment because the scale of deindustrialisation and under-investment is so severe. But a big switch of national income from consumer spending to industrial investment needs large-scale support. It has to be long-run and is obviously potentially unpopular with people who have benefited from the current free-for-all. The Conservative policies, though short-run and short-sighted, are popular with the well-to-do because they distribute national income towards consump-

tion. So they need less organised social consensus to sustain them. The opposition has to convince the private-sector unions, in particular, that these policies will eventually ruin the national economy.

Such a policy does not require state direction of private industry nor rigid incomes policies. Industrial recovery does not depend on an increase in central state control. A strategy which encourages local initiatives and regional partnerships between business and labour can become acceptable. The Labour Party can even show how it can be done now, by using its position in local government.

Britain's labour force is the least educated and skilled of all the major industrial countries, and yet, despite mass unemployment, investment in upgrading skills and retraining is wholly inadequate

Conservative *étatisme* and free-market obsessions work directly against local and regional initiatives. The Tory assault on local government has abolished strategic regional authorities and hampered local governments by cash cuts. But Labour local councils can still build networks of collaboration and information-sharing to aid local industry. Many will argue that local economic initiatives have been a failure. The abolition of the Greater London Council crippled the Greater London Enterprise Board (GLEB) before it could even begin to engage in a learning process. GLEB made many mistakes, but it was less doctrinaire overall than its detractors claim. Other local initiatives have been more pragmatic from the start — eg, the West Midlands, Nottingham, etc.

Many local authorities in the most depressed regions see that local industrial policy provides the only base for dealing with problems the national state has abandoned. Only industrial recovery will provide that core of affluence necessary to make local welfare initiatives possible. Local authorities are already combining to provide common industrial services and assistance networks in their regions (see recent initiatives such as Local Action for Textiles and Clothing, the Motor Industry Local Authority Network and the South East Economic Development Strategy).

Labour as a national party should put the building of effective and non-partisan local government policies for industrial recovery high on the agenda. Only if it does so now will the seeds of future industrial recovery and regional autonomy be sown, to blossom when large-scale investment funds are available. □

1. For a fuller discussion of the shift from mass production to flexible specialisation, see M.J. Piore and C.F. Sabel, *The Second Industrial Divide* (New York, Basic Books, 1984).

Paul Hirst is Professor of Social Theory and Jonathan Zeitlin is Lecturer in History at Birkbeck College. Dr Zeitlin has acted as a consultant for GLEB and the UN. They are the joint editors of Reversing Industrial Decline to be published by Berg, Oxford, this autumn.

**IT'S TIME
FOR ALL
HONEST
CITIZENS
TO
TURN TO
CRIME.**

THE ONE PHRASE among many which has stayed with me after reading Tom Nairn's tremendous piece of writing in last week's *NS* ("The burial of popular sovereignty") was when he conceded, after proposing a "republican revolution" to usher in modernity in political life here, that the proposition was open to charges that "such formal changes and paper principles change nothing in themselves. Well (he went on) no. *It's just that such changes have become a necessary condition for changing anything else at all.*"

The joy felt from reading Nairn was alloyed only by a consideration of the practicalities of the question. Common wisdom is that the Family may have been knocked about a bit, but remains everyone's top people — their eccentricities delightful, their grouchiness lovable, their fabulous wealth "not an issue".

This is no doubt true for now, but will it remain so much longer? In other words, is Nairn's pessimism — explicit in his essay, that the incubus of royalty will be with us for a very long time — actually *not* realistic? I think that it may not be — but the reasons for that are awkward ones for the left.

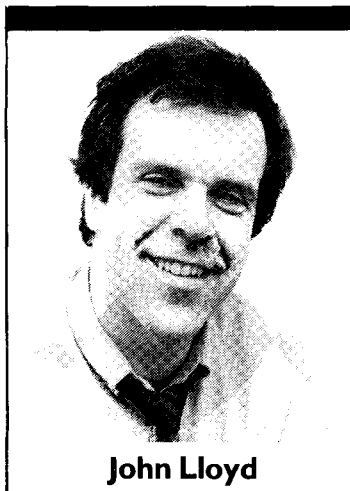
Walter Bagehot, in *The English Constitution*, represented the crown as the "dignified" part of the constitution, its "apparent separation from business is that which . . . preserves its mystery". One hundred and twenty years on, the corruscating attention of the media, especially the popular tabloids, has eaten away at both the dignity and the mystery to the point where the edifice now appears to me to be in serious trouble.

For sure, most of what is written or broadcast is the purest fantasy: the purest, because the royal family, especially the rising generation, is a fantasy for the readers and the viewers, one which — because it rarely confirms or denies anything which is published about it — allows the royal reporters a huge freedom not granted to most journalists. Where there *are* facts, the ones on which the royal watchers pounce most voraciously and which are retailed most avidly are the banalities uttered or activities executed by Di or Fergie: rightly, because the constant frisson is whether or not either of them will sin against the canons of royal behaviour and, if so, by how much. Dancing with John Travolta when in Washington in 1985 has been the known limits of Diana's public courage: trading risqué repartee in California earlier this month is about it for Fergie. All the same, the fact that they, and the other young royals, are constantly and relentlessly exposed as vapid, rich and wholly unexciting in a way which has not happened since Queen Victoria and Her Majesty's Press conspired together to make the monarchy loved, is bad news for the palace.

It is perfectly true, of course, that royal coverage endlessly circles round a few themes and tells you little or nothing — while there is a kingdom of material, more or less easily available, on their land, business interests, wealth and property which any decent journalism should continually put into the public domain, but doesn't. But though that is one of many of the Street's shames, it is beside this point: which is that the sheer voracity of the curiosity which the *Sun*, the *Mirror* and the *Star*, the *Mail* and the *Express* and the *Telegraph*, *News at Nine* and *News at Ten* and then some more have unleashed upon the First Family is too great to be turned aside with a regal wave.

Our Own Dear Queen got to the throne before that wave broke and remains essentially untouch-

STATE OF THE NATION



John Lloyd

Down with republican pessimism

able: but the rest are somewhat in the position of the victims of Hitchcock's birds. Peregrine Worshtorne, whose editorship of the *Sunday Telegraph* has done so much to make it essential reading, wrote a worried leader on the subject some months back — then promptly added his can of petrol to the flames by being indiscreet to the American press about a little dinner party conversation he'd had with the Prince. The image of dignity which sanctimonious Bagehot thought so essential to the royals is now gone — or rather, it exists on a level with a full deck of other images, to be shuffled in and out of the hand to suit the evanescent whims of the media and the assumed imperatives of popular taste.

THE ROYAL family will survive, so long as it *stays the way it is*. The Queen's patent political intelligence and stamina are unlikely to fail; while the royal marriages are young enough to hold out for a bit longer, one would judge. But after the Queen retires? It is hard to think that the mass of people will accord dignity and mystery to the couple and their relatives who have been so effectively deconstructed by the tabloids for so long.

Well, let us hope not. Or . . . not? Putting this view in moderate fashion to two different groups of people who would consider themselves to be broadly of the radical camp, I found myself not just contradicted, but damned as one *who did not see that the correct left position was support for the royals*. The people advancing this case were clever and sincere — if English, which may make a difference. At any event, this was their case:

Prince Charles is a man who has developed a deep contempt for the works of our Prime Minister. A thoughtful, anxious, responsible man, he sees, in the social divisions her government's policies have exacerbated, all that the crown should recoil from in horror. In particular, he thinks that racial tension will rise in the inner cities

and that much more extensive measures should be taken to combat racism and racial disadvantage. His espousal of the "community" school of architecture is a further proof of his concern for the lives of ordinary people: and the passion with which he takes it up is to be explained by the fact that, since it is relatively uncontroversial in straightforwardly political terms, it can stand as a proxy for many other dissatisfactions and thus be the repository of all his frustrated opposition to government policy.

He is, it is said further, open to radical argument and persuasion, desperate to make a contribution to healing the rifts in society. He knows, of course, that he is the dignified and the Prime Minister the efficient part of Bagehot's constitutional dichotomy, but he wants to do what his dignity will allow him. In short, the argument runs, the royal family is the only national institution which the Prime Minister has not destroyed: it is *all we have got*. It has the further advantage of being extraordinarily popular; hence the responsible attitude is one of support against the depredations of Mrs Efficient from Downing Street.

NO. IT won't run. It is true that other centres of power are either diminished or under sustained attack: in some (not all) cases that fact raises the most profound questions of representational democracy, especially where the institutions under threat draw their power from a local electorate. But consider what is being said when it is argued that the *next king* should in some way redress the balance of an overbearing government of the right.

First, it is throwing in the democratic towel: it is saying that voting will change nothing, and that we had best huddle round the Great White Mother or Father and hope her skirts will hide us. To be sure, the opposition parties are unlikely soon to rationalise their position and agree a pact and the absurd first-past-the-post system is unlikely to be changed. But there is such a thing as winning political arguments and the limits to that route are scarcely visible, let alone exhausted.

Second, a prince, even more a king, can only have courtiers: no matter how right, how bright and how concerned they are (and I have my doubts about some of these architects) they represent essentially themselves. At best they are top down reformers — and while that can be very good, it is ultimately worse for democracy than Mrs Thatcher.

Third, we come back to Tom Nairn's point. The royals are the keystone of an arch of ancient mystification which includes an unwritten constitution, the voting system, the Lords, unearned wealth and undeserved privilege. I do not, to repeat, believe that its dismantling will quickly create a really efficient and democratic society, but it has to go if we have a good chance of starting.

It's a sour irony for the left that the right-wing tabloids are more dangerous than anything it has produced (though *Socialist Worker's* headline on the Andrew/Fergie match — "Parasite weds Scrounger" — almost makes you think Trotskyism *has* something). Sour, too, that we should believe that the palace should be defended. Sourer still that it has not been Labour which has addressed the constitutional horrors in government, society and the unions — but the Alliance parties, and the government. But it's never too late to learn: and if I'm right, we may *have* to learn to be republican. □



You can see why by considering a few facts.

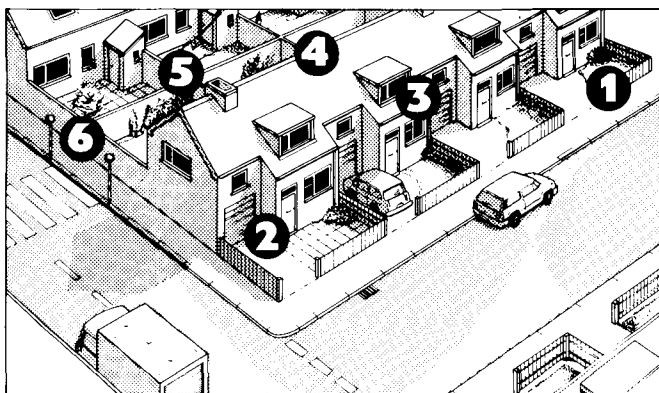
Each year car theft costs us about £300 million, and burglary sets us back by another £150 million.

Yet the police reckon that one car in five is left unlocked, or with windows open, or with expensive goods temptingly on display. It is estimated that over 60% of homes still do not have any window locks (although that's better than a few years ago when it was nearer 90%).

These facts illustrate a basic truth.

HOME TRUTHS ABOUT CRIME.

The truth is that most criminals are on the lookout for a soft touch. They are not



1. Individual front gardens encourage responsibility
2. Integral garages cut down thefts
3. Windows facing street make observation easy
4. Mixed housing encourages social integration
5. Proper fences create sense of privacy
6. Back walls at least 6' high cut down easy access

hardened 'professionals' who set out with particular targets in mind, but young, inexperienced or unsophisticated.

What they're looking for is a house or car that will let them get in, get what they want and get away quickly.

In short, an easy opportunity.

Many of these opportunities can just as easily be removed.

By fitting and using locks. Or by taking other very simple precautions.

New Statesman 18 March 1988

GETTING TOGETHER.

And if we can foil small-time criminals with modest individual effort and cost, how much more could be achieved by working together in Neighbourhood Watches (there are forty-two thousand already)?

Or in other local activities involving police, councils, businesses, voluntary groups and schools?

More radically still, what might we see if more systematic effort was made to design anti-crime features into cars, houses and estates?

This is not a pipe dream: it's already happening.

DESIGNING AGAINST CRIME.

Take housing. There is a growing awareness of how the design, layout and construction of houses and estates can affect the incidence of crime.

Many police forces are now appointing specialist architectural liaison officers in their crime prevention departments.

A new British Standard has been published. Some builders are now building security features into new housing projects.

Or cars. The Institute for Consumer Ergonomics at Loughborough University carried out a research project into automobile security which was presented to the motor industry at a special Home Office conference.

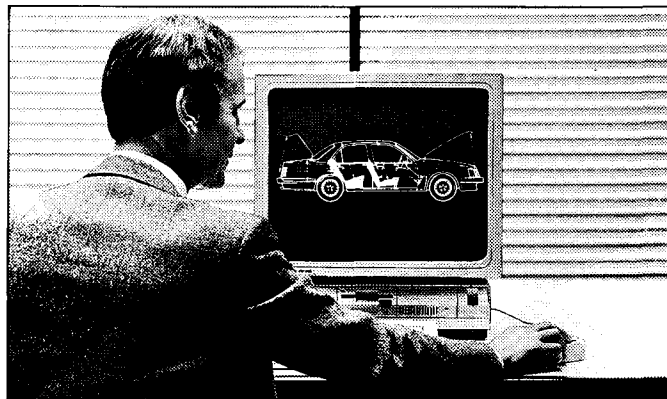
Some manufacturers are now fitting better security on the production line.

Some magazine road tests regularly report on the subject.

PREVENTING VIOLENT CRIME.

About 95% of crimes are against property rather than people. But, not surprisingly, it is the remaining 5% - assault, mugging and rape, for example - that causes the most comment and concern.

But even thugs look for easy opportunities. The dark alley, the pensioner who doesn't check callers' credentials, the child who accepts a lift from a stranger. These can be reduced by personal and community action.



For example, because all of us feel vulnerable sometimes, police and other experts have devised simple, sensible precautions which individuals can adopt to help minimise the risk of being attacked.

THE CRIME BOOK.

Whether simple or sophisticated measures are called for, the scope for preventing crime is still enormous.

So take the opportunity to find out more. Phone 01-200 1000 or send the coupon for your free copy of 'Practical Ways to Crack Crime'.

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PRACTICAL WAYS TO CRACK CRIME

CRIME
 TOGETHER WE'LL CRACK IT

2/NST/18-3

57 varieties of reform — and they all stink

The National Health Service is not in terminal decline. Its worst problems are short-term and entirely the government's fault, argues JOLYON JENKINS

A COUPLE of weeks ago, a journalist from *Newsnight* telephoned to solicit my views on the government's review of the Health Service. Given the plethora of radical ideas coming from the right, she asked, why didn't Labour have any of its own? Would I come on the programme to condemn or explain this curious gap?

The programme never happened (plans to interview Kinnoch fell through, so they didn't want me) but it seemed indicative of an alarming consensus that seems to have lodged itself in media consciousness: the NHS is in terminal decline, and the only people with the guts to face up to this are the free market ideologues, stray American theorists and members of the fruitcake faction of the Tory party who seem to be feeding into Thatcher's NHS review.

If it weren't so outrageous it would be comic. The review, which is so secret that even the presidents of the Royal Colleges aren't being told what's going on, is, according to Thatcher, supposed to sort out the NHS's problems *by the end of this parliament*. If thoroughgoing reform is the real aim, then that timetable is absurd. On those grounds alone Kinnoch is quite right to stick to defending the NHS.

Besides, it is not necessarily paranoid to fear that this time the aim is to dismantle the NHS altogether. In a book published this month¹, former Health Minister Ray Whitney reveals that in December 1986 he persuaded Thatcher to stop saying that the NHS was "safe in our hands" for a whole six months, as he believed it had become "a damaging boomerang".

Gross underfunding

The NHS's worst problems are short-term and entirely the fault of the government. Anyone who doubts this should read the recent report by the Commons Social Services Select Committee, on which the Conservatives have a majority. (This is one of the few HMSO publications that deserves to go to the top of the bestseller lists, and entirely refutes the fashionable belief that select committees aren't up to the job.) It points out that the NHS has treated more patients every year at lower unit costs even while making available the benefits of advances in medical knowledge. It has done this despite having been underfunded, *according to the government's own figures*, by £1.9 billion since 1981. In 1986, Barney Hayhoe, the DHSS minister, acknowledged that "health authority services need at present to grow by about 2 per cent a year in order to meet the pressures they face." This simply hasn't happened.

Just as alarming is the staggering incompetence

with which the DHSS seems to be run. Officials who appeared before the committee couldn't really explain where the 2 per cent figure came from; neither had they any way of measuring whether their policy objectives were being met. The government hasn't made any attempt to discover the extent of the cash crisis that authorities face. "That we regard as extraordinary," says the committee. It also reports that "DHSS officials refused to give us any information about the estimates of inflation relevant to the NHS which were taken into account when preparing the Department's annual bid to the Treasury . . . nor would they tell us whether, in past years, their estimates had been borne out in fact."

Health authority managers are just as much in the dark. They don't know until the very last moment how much money they will get each financial year, making it impossible to plan ahead. Yet the government expects them to make provision for an ever-lengthening list of centrally-imposed "priorities", without saying what proportion of their budgets they are supposed to devote to them. "We wonder," says the committee drily, "whether the word 'priority' is not seriously devalued by so many priorities."

Many of the right-wing reform ideas are being presented as ways to improve efficiency — clearly a useful aim. But experience so far of efficiency drives within the NHS is discouraging. The DHSS has invented a monitoring system which is just as likely to produce inefficiency. It's based on "performance indicators" which measure hospital

inputs (money) and throughput (eg bed occupancy). They don't take into account *output* (health) — so tell nothing whatsoever about efficiency. Yet this is exactly what they are being used to measure. Where performance indicators show that a hospital is out of line with the rest of the country, pressure is exerted to make it cut costs and speed up treatment rates, even where this could lead to readmissions of patients who do not fully recover. As health economist Alan Maynard points out in a new book², this leads to a situation where the goalposts are constantly being moved, as the national average shifts and more hospitals get "out of line".

No incentives

Real efficiency, by contrast, often plunges hospitals deeper into crisis. It simply speeds up the rate at which funds are spent. There's no incentive to increase productivity, because there's no extra money with which to reward it.

On a global scale it is virtually impossible to say whether the NHS is doing well or not, because we have no real means of measuring its output. All we can say is that it has kept costs low compared with other countries (which isn't automatically a good thing) and that Britain compares quite well on crude indicators like infant mortality and life expectancy. Equally there is no evidence that the NHS is in terminal decline, and every reason to think that it could do much better if the government gave it half a chance.

The genuine long-term difficulty has nothing to



Norman Willis and nurses bang the drum for the NHS: are the old tunes the best?

Hugo Dixon

do with efficiency, but is a problem which faces health services in all western countries: medical technology is moving ahead faster than our ability to pay for it. The government's answer is that we have to find new sources of finance — bring in private money. This is bizarre: for years we've been told that private money is all the money there is; now it's being heralded as an entirely new kind of stuff, quite different from what the NHS runs on. Private money can always be converted into public money by taxation. That the government refuses to do this just illustrates that the hidden debate is over the way health care is *rationed*.

Until recently, it was possible to think of access to the best available health care as a *right*. There was some rationing (by class, for example, though the NHS is more egalitarian than the system that preceded it) but it was possible to pretend there wasn't. Medical progress means that we have to abandon this fiction. It's quite proper that we should be forced to realise that health care is a finite commodity; but most health economists agree that it is not an ordinary commodity, and that the rules of neoclassical economics don't apply to it. The 57 varieties of NHS reform now on offer either don't address this question, or else covertly assume (because their champions are mainly interested in grinding axes) that health care should be rationed by some sort of crude price mechanism, which simply means that the poor get unhealthier.

Not everyone can have all the health care they want free of charge, which is why, for example, purely "cosmetic" surgery is not generally available on the NHS. But how do you allocate the rest? One answer is through greater use of "Quality Adjusted Life Years" (QALYs), which try to measure the benefits of health care by counting the number of years a person will live after receiving care, and adjusting this for their quality of life during those years. When you know the costs *and* benefits you can start to have a sensible rationing policy.

This may sound eugenicist and calculating, but these sorts of judgements are being made *now* — only their basis is not openly discussed. Rationing is done by doctors, with the disadvantage that they often don't have much idea how much their treatment costs. Yet, as a report published by the Kings Fund Institute last week³ points out, doctors apply an implicit ranking system, so that, for example, "someone requiring a simple tattoo removal is likely to be assigned such a low priority that their position on the waiting list may mean that they never reach the head of the queue." It makes far more sense to formalise this implicit system of priorities — even if it means doctors losing some of their "clinical freedom" — than it does to throw the whole field open to a "free"-market.

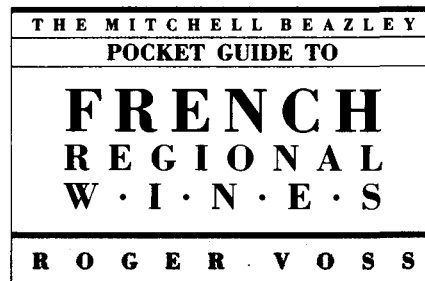
The best defence of the NHS is, in the end, ethical and political. It is founded on the premise that health should be a citizen's right, like voting and equality before the law. The NHS still concerns itself with far too small an area — it virtually ignores accident prevention, alcohol policy, environment protection, and employment policy, for example — and reforms ought to include these areas. But the alternative on offer, of health care as a consumer good to be distributed by the market, is so unappetising that Labour can hardly be blamed for shunning it. ☐

1. *National Health Crisis*, Ray Whitney, Shephard-Walwyn
2. *Reshaping the NHS*, ed. Robert Maxwell; Policy Journals
3. *Health Finance — assessing the options*; Kings Fund Institute

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Desmond Tutu calls for faith, hope and clarity

In South Africa, church and state confront each other head on and, in defiance of all judicial norms, the Sharpeville Six are sent to the gallows. In such a climate, even the moderate ARCHBISHOP TUTU can be depicted as revolutionary. PHILLIP VAN NIEKERK interviews the enigmatic man who is moving to the centre stage

Johannesburg

OF ALL THE anti-apartheid figures in the demography of conservative white South Africans, none irritates, scares and angers them as much as Archbishop Desmond Tutu. Perhaps this is because Tutu is everything they don't want blacks to be: he is smart, articulate and forthright. He is a priest who insists that the religion they share compels him to be involved with politics and speak out against injustice, and they reject this violently because there can be only one version of Christianity and somewhere in their subconscious they are scared it isn't theirs.

Worst of all, this diminutive product of a black ghetto outside Krugersdorp shames them. These days President P. W. Botha has to be content with official receptions hosted by the Prefect of Madei-

ra. The 1984 Nobel Peace Prize winner is feted throughout the world. He is granted audience by leaders from Washington to London to Peking, and uses the opportunity to tell them what the South African regime is up to and how it should be punished.

In an interview with the *New Statesman*, the man whose life has been taken up championing the cause of the victims of white racism and National Party rule was not prepared to condemn white South Africans as such, or to rule out hope for them: "Hope lives not on the evidence available. The current evidence would make you pessimistic, but hope relies on something outside of the current situation and for me that is God's will."

"I believe that you couldn't have anything more hopeless than Good Friday — a young man on the cross with everything indicating that he had suffered a dismal failure, and then Easter happens and whammo. How can evil ever hope to prevail because it reached the pinnacle of its success and was defeated?"

"I believe very fervently that you couldn't have anything more hopeless than Good Friday — a young man strung up on the cross with everything indicating that he had suffered a dismal failure, and then Easter happens and whammo. How can evil ever hope to prevail because it had reached the pinnacle of its success, and was defeated? I believe that the love of God is so tremendous that I don't think that there is anybody who will not ultimately be saved."

These are not words of a revolutionary, which is what Law and Order Minister Adriaan Vlok implied he was last week. In fact, in anti-apartheid circles here the Archbishop is viewed as a moderate. He does not support the use of violence in South Africa, and has never indicated that he is a socialist.

Journalists covering the heady 1984 to 1986 days of township rebellion remember Tutu for being one of the few high-profile leaders who constantly stood up at funerals and rallies and implored the youths to stop burning and necklacing alleged collaborators and informers. He would physically try to stop it if it took place in his presence. That took courage because he was challenging the moral climate imposed by the militant youth in the townships at the time. Few of us will forget the

murmers of disapproval in the crowd when Tutu admonished people for these actions: we thought this guy was on our side, they would say.

Yet Tutu, along with a number of other clerics, has moved to the centre of the political stage following the banning of most of the internal anti-apartheid movement. He explains his involvement in overt politics and the growing move by the churches towards civil disobedience in terms of what he sees as his commitment as a Christian:

"In every situation in the world the primary concern is obedience to God. It is unfortunate that we have to use a negative phrase like civil disobedience. But basically it is the church's response to the gospel imperative to obey God rather than man."

"This is heightened very considerably in situations of oppression and injustice. We don't see it as taking a political stance. For us it is a thoroughly spiritual and religious stance because our faith is one that believes that all of life belongs to God. The dichotomy that is much loved by many between secular and sacred and between politics and religion we regard as totally invalid."

"In our country where many of the legitimate political organisations have been rendered impotent the role of the Church as the voice of the voiceless becomes much more obvious and much more urgent."

Despite his eminent international and religious status, Tutu is regarded as a master of deflating pomposity. One of his noted oratorical feats is his ability to crack a good joke from the pulpit. After being enthroned as Archbishop, he went out jogging wearing a T-shirt with the logo: "Just call me Arch." Tutu has turned the stately grounds and swimming pool of Bishopscourt, the official residence inherited from his eminent predecessors, into a public playground for underprivileged children.

Not an original thinker

Tutu believes he is not in the same league as American civil rights leader Martin Luther King Junior, who also won the Nobel Peace Prize: "The point is he was a great orator and a very original thinker. I am not an original thinker. I may be able to articulate things very well, but I don't claim to be very good at thinking out original thoughts. There are many, many people who are much smarter than I am. That's not false modesty. I am awfully good at articulating things which I hold dear."

"The other thing is that Martin Luther King was operating in terms of civil rights which were guaranteed under their constitution. We operate here in a complete lack of basic human rights where the constitution and the laws of the country are your opponents. You wonder whether you have a constituency to appeal to with a conscience which could be outraged by some of the things which happen here. People get more hot under the collar

THE SOCIALIST CONFERENCE

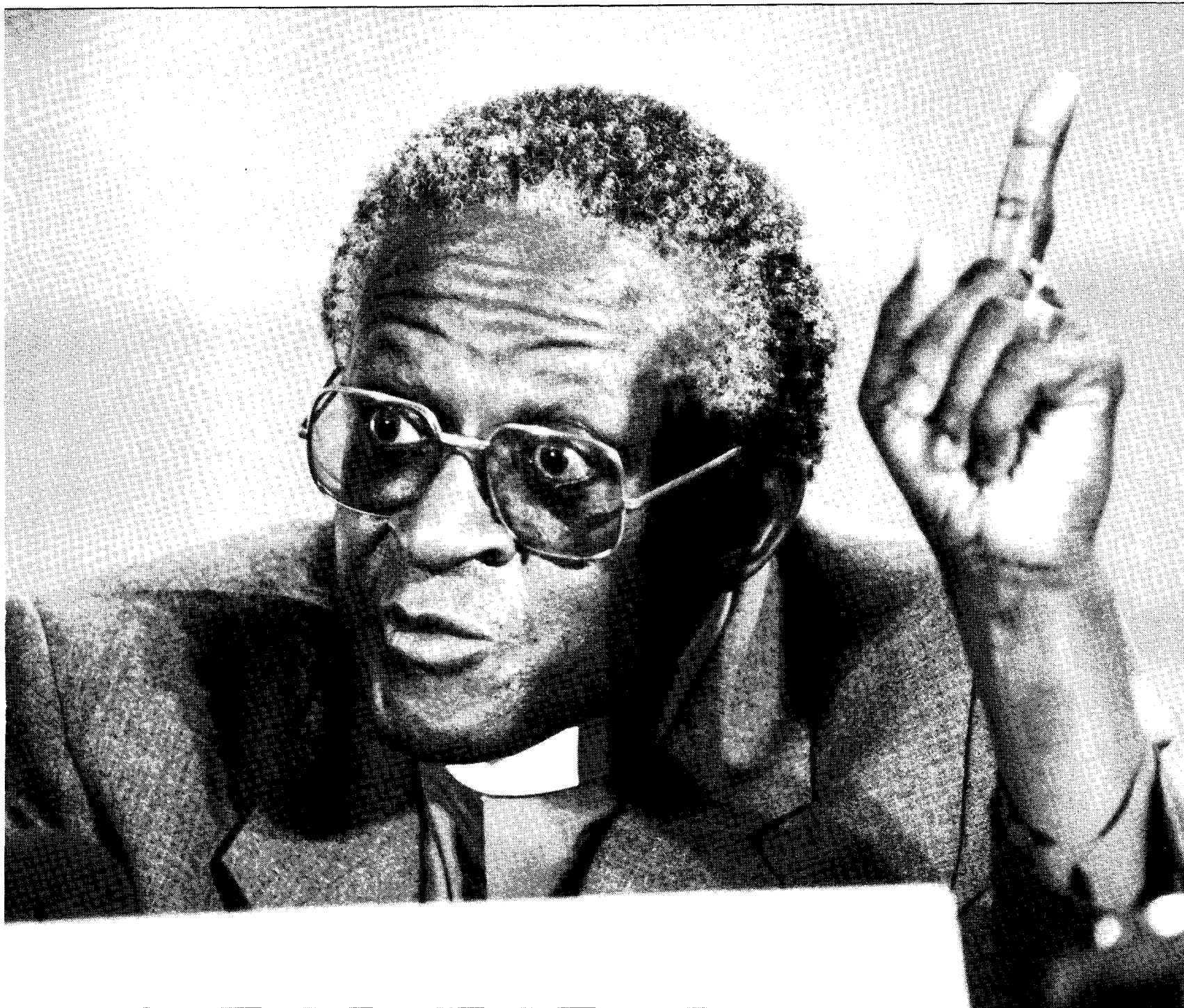
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u points the finger at Britain and Thatcher for their "thoroughly reprehensible policy"

Rex Features

because clergymen have staged a march to parliament than they do about the fascists of the Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging."

Tutu supports the African National Congress in its objectives but has said that he does not support its methods. He is most reviled in South Africa for urging sanctions and disinvestment and most recently for launching a campaign to get western countries to break diplomatic relations with South Africa.

"In calling for a break in diplomatic relations, I am calling for some dramatic gesture by the West. Even if it is just a gesture, it is one that has very significant psychological consequences. I am challenging those countries which are not applying sanctions in any way because they say it would affect blacks adversely by saying: well, here is something that you can do that you can't say hurts the blacks. The silence from Britain and West Germany has been deafening."

Tutu criticises Britain and Margaret Thatcher for a "thoroughly reprehensible policy"; for not applying sanctions; and for the recent veto of the United Nations Security Council resolution providing for mandatory sanctions against South Africa: "All their declarations about abhorrence of apartheid is so much rhetoric and I am challenging them on moral grounds: are they or are they not on the side of the oppressed because their actions indicate very clearly just where they are."

Showdown looms

All the while, the Church-State showdown is moving closer. Last week Minister Vlok banned the Committee for the Defence of Democracy, which was formed by Tutu among others in the wake of 24 February clampdown, and warned that he would not hesitate to take action against the churches. "Rather than becoming involved in the true Christian message, certain clergy are becoming

more and more involved in preaching revolution," said Vlok. He called on those clergymen to "turn away from the road of confrontation they have taken."

Archbishop Tutu replied from the pulpit the next day that "If you want to take on the church of God, read a bit of history and see what happened." He said that a lot of repressive governments had tried to take on the Church, but these governments had long since gone while the Church was still there.

Tutu told the *NS* that the march to parliament and Sunday's defiant service were just part of a process: "As long as apartheid is around and as long as authorities react the way they have done, so the people will have to respond. The initiative is not with the authorities. The initiative is with us. They can't ban us — what we are doing is what the community wants. To stop us they would have to ban the whole population." □

In black and white

ALEXANDER COCKBURN provides a different commentary on the US presidential race and identifies Jesse Jackson as the candidate to watch: on p22, Barbara Ehrenreich says why she is supporting him

THE EDGE OF CONCERN in the tone of the opinion-formers, if not their more confident patrons, came when Jesse Jackson won his first state outside the south: Alaska. Alaska is conceived of by most people as being covered with snow, therefore quintessentially white. So the shock was very great at the news that the loyalty of Alaska's Democrats had now yielded to a black.

In symbolic terms Alaska really made it impossible to stick with the comforting illusion that Jackson would never make any headway above the Mason-Dixon line.

Even before Super Tuesday he'd put the lie to that, first in Iowa where he won 11 per cent of the vote in a state where blacks make up 3 per cent of the population. He came second in Maine and Vermont, with over 25 per cent of the vote in both cases. Unless the US Bureau of the Census has been lying all these years, concealing the fact that these two northeastern states are actually part of the old slave South, this showing by Jackson was extraordinary. There are only about a thousand blacks in either state.

Next, he did well in Minnesota with another 25 per cent of the vote, and headed south for Super Tuesday.

Only once before had a black American ever won a primary election. This was Jackson in Louisiana in 1984. The *New York Times* celebrated the historical breakthrough with a medium-grade headline, "Jackson Wins Louisiana in Low Voter Turnout." On 10 March, aside from Alaska, he won Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, Virginia and, most likely — the caucus votes are still being counted — the state of Washington. All this with an expenditure of only \$100,000 on television advertising. His rivals spent millions.

Actually Jackson won the popular vote that day, though gerrymandering of the allocation of those votes left Dukakis leading in the delegate count by a score or so. The press celebrated by saying the competition for the Democratic nomination was now a two-man race between Dukakis and Gore, an analysis echoed by Gore in Jackson's presence. Gore hastily re-spoke himself. He had meant to say "three-man race" but the words had somehow gone wrong as they came up from his larynx. This was when concern began to creep in, particularly when the opinion formers looked at a state like Virginia. The percentage of blacks in the population of Virginia is 33 per cent.

The alarm stems from the fact that Jackson is now headed for the rustbelt states beyond Illinois, which he also might win. In the desolate auto towns of Michigan and Wisconsin he is popular and the Democratic machine in Michigan, which is hostile to him, is beginning to arrange for its caucuses to

be held in remote spots known only to the initiated. Ahead lies New York, which Mayor Koch, who loathes him, said Jackson would win; and ahead of New York now stretch question marks all the way to California, the last of the primaries.

The press — particularly in New York, Washington and his own home town of Chicago — hates Jackson with a racism, variously decorous and rabid, that is quite striking. Columnists still go after Jackson for having once privately called New York "Hymietown", which indeed he should not have done. Bob Dole should not have called a black man "thick lips" last year, but no one went after him. It's not that people care much about the "Hymietown" remark any more, but it's still a fine way of beating Jackson on the head. Another technique is to get the anti-semitic black preacher Louis Farrakhan to say something nice about Jackson and then rush to Jackson to ask him to repudiate Farrakhan's odious verbal caresses. When Jackson is sometimes reluctant to do so, avoiding indecent haste in hopping to the white man's whistle, he is flayed for such failure and once again charged with black racism.

No thieving

For years now teams of investigative reporters have combed through the books of Jackson's Operation PUSH in Chicago, hoping to find satisfactory evidence of thievery. Thus far they have left with empty hands. A few months ago a floodtide of rumours insinuated that the *Atlanta Constitution* had prepared an exposé of his sexual philandering. Nothing was ever published. More recently, perhaps as a sign of desperation, the refrain has returned to the old standby, "What does Jackson really want?" — a question whose racist undergarment is, "to kill you of course".

Jackson is hated by white journalists and editors because he has so consistently defied the rules of the game and lived to fight another day. And now they are realising that they have been reading America wrong these last two or three years and Jackson has been reading it right. Opinion-former wisdom maintained that America was still plunging rightwards and the only way to the heart of the "silent majority", conventionally perceived as several million taciturn fascists living in and around Grand Rapids, lay through protectionism à la Gephardt.

Other opinion-formers — by which I mean the iron triangle of pollsters, political managers and columnists — claimed that only a "moderate" (someone, that is, who wants moderate amounts of money to be given to *contra* so they can rape women and murder small children) is electable, and therefore the Democratic heir-apparent should be Senator Al Gore of Tennessee. A man much loved by the opinion-formers.

There's nothing much you can say about Gore, even after deep thought lasting several minutes. He's the Pat Boone of politics. Gore and George Bush have in common the fact that both their fathers were US senators. This heritage has produced in each man a kind of whinnying boyishness, a lust to please that would be touching in a child but is pretty repugnant in persons of mature years.

Gore is being backed by Martin Peretz, owner of the *New Republic*, *echt* coldwar liberal and implacable lobbyist for Israel's interests. Gore remains one of the least convincing hawks ever seen on American television, exuding compromise, like the man on the beach in those ads where the big fellow kicked sand in his face. His wife Tipper has the distinction of being hated by the nation's youth, or strategic portions of same. She is a moving spirit in PMRC, a parents' lobby against dirty rock lyrics. By the hour her aides sit listening to Prince or heavy metal groups, trying to detect moral baseness, or at least lewd words, which isn't hard in the case of Prince but a problem in the case of Motley Crue or Twisted Sister's inchoate roars.

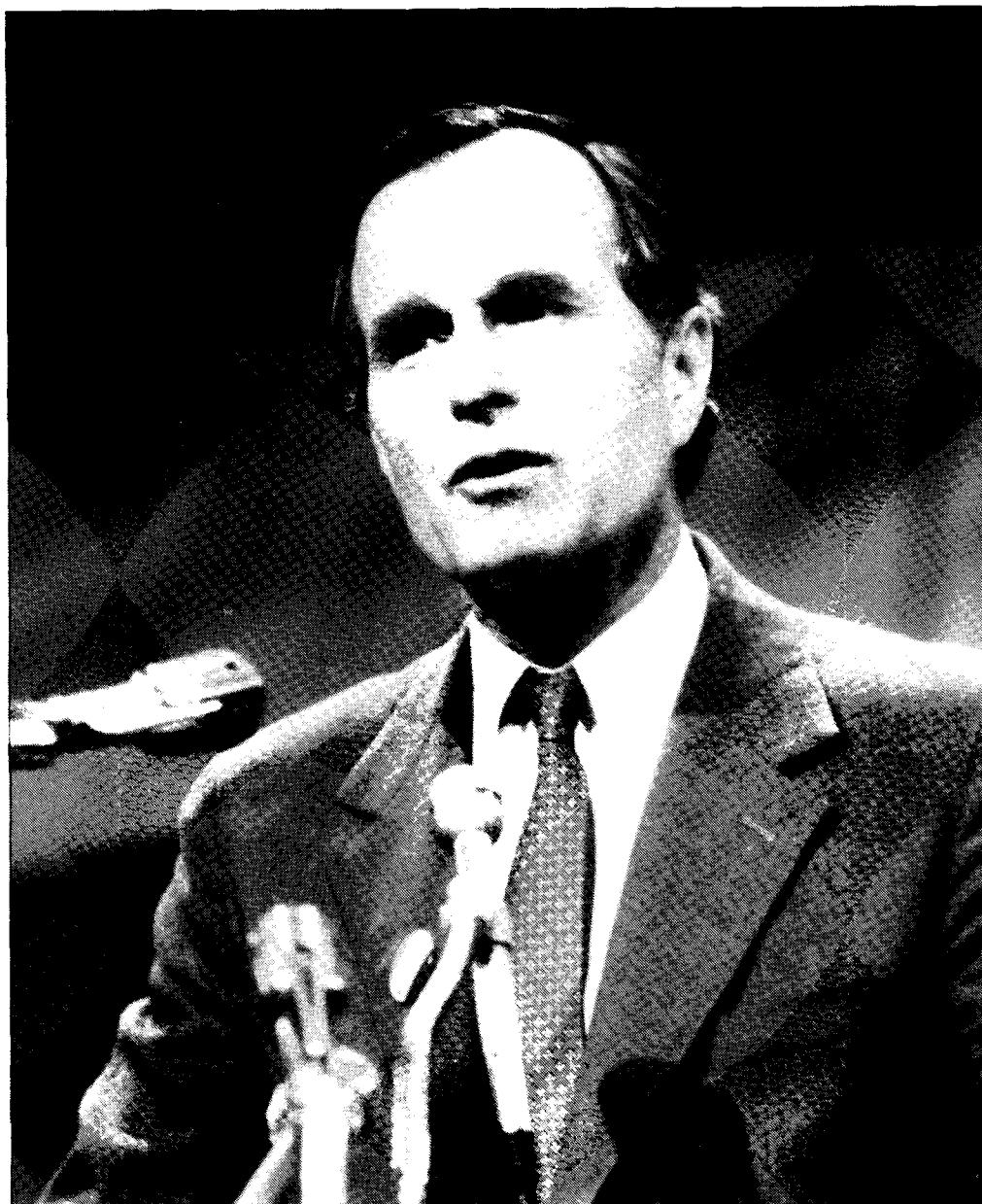
Finally Gore realised that no one particularly wanted to hear him braying about "resolve" or "keeping America strong". The great thing about Reagan, who has himself been trending to Leninism lately, is that he has devalued talk about making America strong again for at least a decade. People are fed up with that kind of thing. So Gore shifted gears and began to talk about economic justice and the tribulations of the little guy. He promptly went up in the polls. Like all the other candidates, he realised that Jackson had read America correctly.

Little red schoolhouse

Reading America correctly consists of the rather elementary task of realising that if 20 per cent of the nation has been getting richer in the Reagan years, the other 80 per cent have not, and are displeased or desperate at this turn in their affairs. Here was the objective basis, as they used to say in the little red schoolhouse, for a rainbow coalition which by the very nature of its constituent parts would partake of a left rather than right-wing populism: against the money power but also against maiming children in Nicaragua or paying for death squads in El Salvador.

‘The joke went that two broke Iowa farmers were discussing Jackson. “But he’s black,” the first says. The second answers: “A white man took my farm”. A lot of Iowa farmers voted for Jackson and so did their neighbours in Minnesota’

The joke went that two broke Iowa farmers were discussing Jackson. "But he's black," the first says. The second answers: "A white man took my farm". A lot of Iowa farmers voted for Jackson and so did their neighbours across the state line in southern Minnesota. Jackson won in Maine's two largest cities, in part because no candidate has walked more picket lines than Jackson; gone to talk in front of more shuttered factories; comforted desolated townships where the chief



George Bush: every woman's first husband, or the dynamic number two, swotting up on spreadsheets?

employer has shifted to the Mexican border or to Taiwan. Is an auto worker who has just heard that Chrysler is going to pull out of Kenosha, Wisconsin, going to believe in a Tennessee whiteshoe boy like Gore, a technocrat like Dukakis or Jackson, who talks clearly about "economic violence"?

Dukakis was one of the "lowered expectations" governors of the mid-seventies, in the style of Jerry Brown but without the guru governor's Zen drollery. He threw lots of poor people off the welfare rolls and ran a tight ship, navigating a course laid down by the corporate powers-that-be in Massachusetts, bankers, arms makers and hi-tech entrepreneurs. The consequence was Massachusetts' famous recovery, about which Dukakis ceaselessly boasts, even though it shares the characteristic of all such recoveries in late twentieth-century America of being based on military spending.

He's been a big promoter of "workfare", forcing welfare clients living on little to work for less. Though even more awful than most Democrats on the Middle East, he has made some vehemently anti-CIA and anti-interventionist speeches concerning Central America. Fans say that as president he'll do the good that he can and only the harm that he must. He doesn't seem one of

nature's cold warriors, though one of his chief foreign policy advisers was Brzezinski's number two.

Tell us another, Bob

Over on the Republican side Bush has finished off Dole, the only man in the race on either side who seemed to have a seriously tormented psyche. He's said awful things but I always rather liked Dole. He could never resist telling a joke, even when it did him no good. When he was threatening to edge out Bush in New Hampshire his advisers tried to get him to make the advertisement, obligatory in New Hampshire, pledging never to raise taxes.

The cameras rolled but he flubbed the pledge and rushed from the studio to a debate where he was asked by an earnest Republican ultra. "How can we get the Russians out of Afghanistan?" Already mentally composing his inauguration speech Dole shouted back, "Lend them a road map." New Hampshire Republicans, who take themselves seriously, thought rightly that Dole was making fun of them and voted for Bush, whose political chances they ruined in 1976.

There's some illusion still rife that Bush is some sort of a liberal, forced during the Reagan years to wear the mask and vote to bring back nerve gas.

(He cast the Senate tie-breaker on that one, but couldn't face telling his mother. Ron had to call the old lady and break the news.) My friend Jane O'Reilly once wrote that George Bush is every woman's first husband. I'm not sure this is true. If the first husband was Hopeless Henry, stuck halfway up the corporate ladder, George was the go-ahead Number 2 taking power breakfasts with the boss and swotting up on the spreadsheets way past bedtime.

I interviewed Bush once in a small plane somewhere over Pittsburgh and he talked about the CIA with rapturous intensity, lauding its potential in the late 1970s and early 1980s. The advantage of having Bush as the Republican candidate, assuming you believe in the therapeutic powers of a Democrat in the White House, is that he is a walking timebomb, liable to explode at the first surfacing of any further documents clarifying his role in funding the *contra* or turning a blind eye to their adventures in the drug business.

Milian Rodriguez, a Cuban-American bagman for the Colombian drug cartel, has testified to a Senate committee that he gave \$10 million from the cartel to another Cuban-American called Felix Rodriguez to hand on to the *contra*. This second Rodriguez was resident at Ilopango air base in El Salvador at the time, supervising US *contra* supply flights into Nicaragua. When Eugene Hasenfus's plane went down on 5 October 1986 Felix Rodriguez made haste to call Bush's office and later investigation revealed him to have been a visitor there.

Rodriguez's partner in Ilopango air base was Luis Posada Carriles, accused of having blown up a Cuban commercial airliner in 1976 with the loss of over 70 lives. This man too was a phone call away from the Vice President's office.

"What does Jackson want?" they ask, without realising that he has already got a lot of what he wants: with his victories he has made history; with his politics he has set the political tone, just as Ronald Reagan did in 1976. "What deal does he want to cut?" they also ask, thinking ahead to the convention in Atlanta. Answer: no one yet knows, least of all Jackson, because what he may want will be defined by his fortunes in the weeks to come. His supporters should say that what Jackson wants is the names of people he can consider as his running mate.

Two weeks ago I mentioned that the great magician of 1976 was claiming that Gorby was really and truly different from all the other Soviet leaders. Ron said that what separated Mikhail Sergeyevich from the pack was that he wanted "to do what Lenin was teaching" and extract the Bolshevik kernel from Stalin's perversions.

Who would have thought in 1976, or 1980, or 1984 that it would all end with Reagan being attacked by the *Washington Post* for being a dupe of Lenin? If two men are defining the politics of this campaign year, one is Jackson and the other is General Secretary Gorbachev. □

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Who says a black man can't be president?

Jackson supporter BARBARA EHRENREICH explains why she's rooting for Jesse

New York

NO CANDIDATE has been so rudely handled by the press as Jesse Jackson. When he emerged as the Democratic frontrunner in the opinion polls, the news analysts started sneering at the "seven dwarves". When he isn't being whited out of the campaign news, he's being interrogated for secret motives. "Does This Man Want to Be King?" asked the *US News and World Report* Jesse Jackson cover story — although that office has been closed to Americans for at least two centuries. "The Power or the Glory?" agonised Gail Sheehy in her *Vanity Fair* psycho-profile of the candidate, as if the presidency weren't even an option.

When it comes to the issues — which are still a rather occult domain for most commentators — the press is fond of saying that only Richard Gephardt has found a theme, namely protectionism and Asia-bashing. Hardly anyone has picked up on Jackson's far more challenging view of the US's economic problems. Instead of scapegoating foreign competitors, he argues that the American people should be calling US corporations to account for exporting jobs to the Third World and squandering their resources on mergers and speculation. Nor has there been a serious response to Jackson's far-reaching domestic proposals — for a comprehensive national health programme, for subsidised childcare, for a federal jobs programme — other than to file these under "traditional liberalism".

When he isn't being psychoanalysed or simply ignored, Jackson is taken to task for getting off so lightly. As the *New Republic* wrote recently:

What if Jesse Jackson were white? The truth is he'd be a laughing-stock. As it is, he's gotten a free ride and a simulacrum of respect. That is due to a residual, patronising racism that refuses to hold a black candidate to even the abysmally low standards to which we hold white candidates. (19 October 1987)

None of this, of course, throws a very flattering light on those of us who support Jackson. Either we're black nationalists, possibly of the noxious Louis Farrakhan variety, or we're white racists — an interesting recipe for a Rainbow Coalition! Hardly any of the media's Jackson-watchers seem to have considered the possibility that Jackson is running for the presidency because he wants to be president, and that his supporters are supporting him because we are convinced that he is the best man for the job.

Limousine liberals

But let me introduce a few of his actual supporters. Not long ago I spent a couple of days in New Hampshire doing house parties and giving talks for

Jackson. I don't know what I expected to find — maybe a few upper-crust ladies of the limousine-liberal persuasion. Maybe a black person, if there happened to be one in the state at the time.

Except for the black person — a West Hartford, Connecticut, factory worker who had come up to canvass because "the condition of the working man has gotten sickening" — none of my expectations of the New Hampshire Jackson forces were remotely confirmed. There was a house party full of pink-collar women who looked like Wallace supporters circa 1968, only they were throwing around words like "movement" and "struggle".

What distresses the media most about Jackson is not that he is black, but that he is the first political leader since the heyday of agrarian populism successfully to reach out to black and white Americans with a message that is both politically liberal and class militant

There was a young Hispanic volunteer, an assistant manager at a fast food place, who further confounded my stereotypes by saying he was for Jackson "because I appreciate his stand on gay rights". There was a gaggle of college students — carpet-baggers from Ohio and locals from the state college — who had dark circles under their eyes and talked about peace. There was an elderly woman who surprised everyone by writing out a cheque for \$100. "This time, I think we really have a chance," she said to me, confident I would know who "we" are.

I knew, of course, what I liked about Jackson before I ever thought of going to New Hampshire. He is simply the most liberal candidate in the running, the only one committed to reversing the haemorrhage of public funds to the military and the upward flow of wealth to the already-rich. What I found out from meeting his grassroots supporters is that he is also a genuine populist, capable of stirring the "Middle Americans" that the far right laid claim to 20 years ago. You'll find a lot of coffee and frosted doughnuts on the Jackson circuit, but no crudité or granola, and not a bite of brie. The same is true closer to home, in New York City, where Jackson has won support from within most of the unions, including such bastions of white-working class power as the Teamsters and the Building Trades. In the pale part of the

Rainbow spectrum, Jesse Jackson is a working-class hero.

This is what I think distresses the media most about him: not that he is black (though that may be distressing enough), but that he is the first political leader since the heyday of agrarian populism successfully to reach out to black and white Americans with a message that is both politically liberal and *class militant*. And this may be the ultimate historical significance of his campaign: not only that he is one of the first black people (Shirley Chisholm was the very first) to try to break into the 200-year-old white male dynasty that is the presidency, but that he showed the way to a revival of liberal, in fact, *left* liberal, populism.

Exactly two decades ago the right appropriated the language of populism and the politics of class. George Wallace — who was, in some ways, an eerie negative of Jesse Jackson — showed the way, and pretty soon millionaire Republicans like Spiro Agnew were speaking up for the common folk and against the "liberal elite".

In part because of its spurious populism, among other temporary advantages, the far right came to power and — it should have been no surprise — proceeded to grind the "common folk" under its heel. Workers' rights have been undermined, leaving the employing class free for the worst wave of union-busting and wage-cutting since the '20s. The real elite, which has never been liberal, was pampered with tax cuts and encouraged to gorge itself in the speculative binge that peaked, for a moment, in Black Monday. "Middle Americans" saw their incomes stagnate, even with two adults per family out hustling in the labour force. And, for the first time since the '40s, the median family income became too low to purchase a middle-class lifestyle.

Black capitalist

Many on the left-liberal side of the political spectrum would have preferred that the person who reclaimed populism for them was someone quite different from Jesse Jackson: someone less identified with black capitalism, if not someone more electably white. Certainly if I could have designed a populist leader for 1988 he or she would have been more deeply feminist than Jackson, less puritanical in his social message, less likely to confuse "Jews" with Israel. And I would definitely not have made him a Baptist minister.

But it was Jesse Jackson — not Pat Schroeder or Mario Cuomo or any number of other possibilities — who leapt into the "opening". From 1984 on, he courted "the dispossessed" of all colours with an energy and passion that no other political figure could even begin to simulate. He rallied farmers facing foreclosure. He stayed overnight in tenement apartments with the poor. He picketed with the striking meatpackers in Austin, Minnesota, even after they had been abandoned by their parent



Jesse Jackson: reviving the lost language of genuine populism

union. He joined white strikers — in Jay, Maine, and Cudahy, Wisconsin — who were facing black scabs, and preached class solidarity to both. He was the only one of the Democratic candidates to address the April 1987 march on Washington against intervention in Central America or the October march for gay rights. He likes to be with people at what he calls “the point of challenge” — the moment of crisis and confrontation — and, somehow, he usually manages to get there.

Perhaps most importantly, he has revived the lost language of genuine populism. The one time I heard him speak in person he was detached, analytical, skipping deftly from issues such as acid rain to pay equity and deficits. He can do that. But, most of the time, in his basic stump speech, he sounds like an a cappella Woody Guthrie rallying the underdogs, the salt of the earth:

Workers, it's time for a change . . . Together we can win. Workers united can never be defeated . . . I know it's been tough, but don't give up. Above all, keep your dignity, keep your self-respect. Hold your head high, stick your chest out. Be proud. You built America. You built the world. This land is your land.

Demagoguery? Well, maybe. But it's old-fashioned left-wing demagoguery, and we haven't heard that kind of talk around here for a long time.

By this time, Jackson's populism has infected the other candidates. Gephardt, the post-neoliberal and former “moderate”, has been campaigning in a wind-breaker against “greed” and “the establishment”. He has taken to borrowing Jackson's rhyming analysis of how the corporations like to “merge” with each other and “purge” the workers. The aristocratic Gore has just announced what the *New York Times* calls a

“strategic shift” in his campaign, which will refocus on “the average working man and woman”. Even the Republicans are talking about “compassion”, much as if Sean Penn were to take up humility. But the Jackson-ward drift of the campaign should not become an excuse for liberals to embrace the most “electable” Jackson surrogate. He created the new left-liberal populism and, as much as the others try to cut in on it, he is still the best man for the job.

He is the most experienced candidate running. True, he has never held public office, but that should make us all the more appreciative of what he has accomplished *without* the power of government behind him. As America's foremost contemporary civil rights leader, he has long experience in pushing for change from outside the centres of power, peacefully and by persuasion. As a kind of freelance diplomat, he has met heads of state in Central America, the Middle East, Southern Africa, Japan and Korea. These encounters have been far more than photo opportunities, and much more productive than the average Congressional junket. When he met Fidel Castro, he talked him into going along with the Contradora peace process and releasing 48 Americans from Cuban jails. When he met Syria's Assad, he got him to release an American hostage. He even managed an impromptu confrontation with Gorbachev about the plight of Soviet Jews. And he did all this without the might of America's missiles behind him, without even throwing in a few TOWs to sweeten the deal.

He is also the candidate who knows ordinary Americans best, who is least insulated by big-time donors, image-handlers and other flunkies or, of course, Bush-style talking limousines. Jesse Jackson would bring with him to the presidency a perspective that has been absent from that office for a long time now — that of the nurses' aide making just above the minimum wage, the blue-collar worker fighting to hold on to a union wage, the small-business person struggling to stay above water.

“But can he *sit still*?” an undecided Democrat asked me recently, perhaps alarmed by Gail Sheehy's judgement that “Jackson in the Oval Office would be a caged bird”. Well maybe he can't, but would that be such a bad thing? We have had, for nearly eight years now, a president who sat so still no one could tell whether he was napping, and who went out to the people only in the form of a vague holographic image, hovering just out of hearing range. No wonder so many of the candidates are boasting of their ability to “manage”, promising to don a green eye-shade and spend time going over the budget with a sharpened pencil.

But a president must also *lead*, and leading, it is often forgotten, is largely a matter of listening: getting out of the office and into the streets, the factories, the shopping malls, the farmlands. Bringing adversaries together and making them listen to each other. Above all, being able to hear those voices that are not amplified by wealth or corporate power, and being able to translate their hopes into a vision for change, their grievances into a programme for action. Jesse Jackson can do that. And if, just for a few months, we could refrain from the self-fulfilling prophecy that a black man can't win in America, then I believe that Jesse Jackson will get his chance to do that, and that America will see an exuberant rebirth of grassroots democracy. □

Barbara Ehrenreich is co-chair of Democratic Socialists of America.

Books

There's a photograph of Myra Hindley taken at the time of her arrest, and reproduced on the cover of Jean Ritchie's book, which has become synonymous with the idea of feminine evil.

This photograph — of the woman who, with Ian Brady, participated in the murder of five young people before their arrest in 1965 — continues to stare from the pages of newspapers, books and magazines. Nearly a quarter of a century after she took part in those brutal crimes, her picture still triggers fierce controversy — even amongst people too young to remember the original case. And the issue of her parole, for which Hindley has campaigned so hard, whips up a tide of adverse publicity and hatred every time it is raised. The name of Ian Brady, meanwhile, rarely hits the headlines. What is it about the Hindley case that is so unique? Why, more than any other criminal this century, has Myra Hindley been singled out for vilification?

One of the obvious answers to those questions must be her gender. As a woman who killed children, Hindley transgressed all the norms of traditional femininity. Her crimes are seen as an outrage against the "maternal instinct"; there's an implicit assumption among the mythmakers that infanticide committed by a woman is somehow more horrific, more ineffable than it is for a man. As Jean Ritchie admits at the end of **Myra Hindley: Inside the Mind of a Murderess** (Angus & Robertson, £3.50), had Brady carried out his murders with a male assistant "the case would have made massive headlines at the time, but his name would have been all but forgotten by now".

Part of the reason why Hindley attracts such attention is the influential nature of her allies in her bid for parole, notably Lord Longford, and her own constant protestations of innocence. But the contest over Hindley's status as a criminal and woman has taken place in a blaze of publicity from the moment of her arrest. The committal proceedings were open to the public and (the law didn't change until 1967) journalists were permitted to report what went on. "It was," as Jean Ritchie concedes, "impossible to say that the 12 jurors sworn in had been untouched by all the publicity." Both Hindley's family and friends and the family and friends of the victims continue to be hounded by the press; some have sold their stories; ex-prisoners have smuggled out photographs of her; numerous "true crime" investigations of the case continue to appear, asking essentially the same

That photograph of Myra Hindley and (below) another icon of dyed-blond remorselessness: Ruth Ellis



Rex Features

Camera Press

questions as the blurb on Ritchie's book: "Victim or psychopath? Unwilling accomplice or monster?"

Ritchie doesn't so much analyse the meanings attached to these terms as evade them, tacitly admitting that to seek the "truth" in this way is to ask the wrong questions. Her conclusion — that "It is right and fitting that her punishment should be lifelong" — seems like an admission of her failure to get *Inside the Mind of a Murderess*. But despite the relentless clichés, the portentous prose and the facile psychology, her book does throw up contradictions which shed some light on the way that the Hindley myth has been constructed and the place of the murderess in the popular imagination.

Basing her opinions on interviews with Hindley's family, the relatives of the victims, prison officers and friends, Ritchie treads the by now familiar path through Hindley's childhood, her meetings with Brady, the murders and the trial, the years in prison. In sensational tabloid style, she recalls Myra's many lesbian affairs, including the notorious relationship with prison officer Pat Cairns and the plot to escape — cited as evidence of her unsavoury promiscuity, her power to manipulate others and use them to protect her from less sympathetic prisoners. Questioning her status as a "real" lesbian (homophobia is rampant throughout the book), Ritchie concludes that Hindley did whatever was most convenient, duped all her supporters, "believed her own lies", and claims that even her 1987 confession of complicity in the murders of Pauline Reade and Keith Bennett (for which she had previously disclaimed responsibility and for which she has never been convicted) was just another ruse to gain public sympathy: "Caring Myra, the woman who did not torture children, but only killed them?" While admitting that many women prisoners engage in sexual relationships with other prisoners, she insists that Hindley's own were perverse, tainted, and implicitly links her "unstable" sexuality with the deviance that led her to murder. And, although she acknowledges the young Myra's consuming obsession with Brady's strangeness and her desire to escape the anodyne expectations of her working-class background, she never ties Brady's initiation of Myra into fascist philosophy, classical music and literature to her later attempts to educate herself, still less to the potency of romantic myth for women. If Brady was indeed the "god" which replaced Hindley's Catholicism, why was she so attracted to his

Twice unnatural creatures

The latest "inside Myra Hindley" book says nothing that's new about the infanticide's motives; but it does, explains HELEN BIRCH, say a lot about our troubled perceptions of and reactions to women who kill

"theology"?

In all probability, the particular conjunction of events, experiences and beliefs which led Myra Hindley to kill will never be revealed. She has been given permission to write an autobiography but, if and when it appears, it's unlikely to tell us anything more; the confessional "truth" is always constructed from ideas and interpretations from elsewhere, as the literature on Hindley clearly shows.

Inside the Mind of a Murderess was recently serialised in the *Sun*, the newspaper which has led the campaign against Hindley. The notorious photograph is cut to show just the eyes, dark and ominous above the headline "Sex Romps with an Ex Nun on E Wing". The parts of the book chosen for extract are predictable enough — the affairs in prison, the "jailbreak plot" — and are heavily edited to retain only the most salacious details. One piece, headlined "Mad or Bad?", accuses her of "moral corruption"; another goes on to define just what that means for women: the news that Hindley posed for "pornographic photographs" is immediately followed by her sister's statement that "she stopped going to church and said she hated babies and did not believe in marriage". Sexual deviancy again aligned with depravity; female sexual desire with social transgression.

Yet Hindley is not the only modern woman to commit infanticide. The case of Carol Hanson, for example, who colluded with her husband in the sexual abuse of children, one of whom was murdered, received scant publicity. And only recently, Mariella Beehook was convicted of the murder of two girls, one of whom was her daughter. But Beehook, like Brady, had — in the words of Ann West, mother of one of his victims — "at least the decency to go mad".

Hindley, on the other hand, is viewed as sane — "a calculated pretty cool operator" in the words of the prosecution. For 22 years she stuck to her line; police officers questioning her at the time of her arrest saw her as a "tough nut"; the story goes that she sat impassive throughout the trial, in smart clothes, full make up, with newly dyed hair. There are echoes here of the case of Ruth Ellis, who also refused compliance and remorse, shocking the public when she appeared on the witness stand in fur coat and bleached hair. Feminists have since argued that one of the reasons Ellis was sent to the gallows was because, in the eyes of the all-male jury, her appearance did not match the line of her defence. However different their respective crimes were, the response to them as women was the same.

If Ritchie's book brings us no closer to understanding why Hindley did what she did, the persistence of the myth — in which it plays an inevitable part — raises crucial questions about the standards by which femininity is judged and the ways in which the reality of a female serial killer unhinges our assumptions about women. To this day we don't know the extent of Hindley's participation in the killings — perhaps she was, after all, an equal partner — but we can see how the notion of opposite extremes and ideological "norms" of female behaviour combine either to deny her agency, to make her the "innocent victim" of a psychopathic megalomaniac, or to cast her as essentially wicked: woman as Lilith. The mythology reveals, above all, that we don't have a language to describe female killing, and that a case like Hindley's disrupts the very terms which hold gender in place. □



Spring in autumn

Martin Chalmers

October: The First Decade 1976-1986

Ed. ANNETTE MICHELSON, ROSALIND KRAUSS
DOUGLAS CRIMP and JOAN COPJEC
MIT £17.95

THE LATE 1970s and early '80s were springtime for postmodernism. With the abandonment of modernism's illusions and disordering of its goals there briefly flourished a diversity of projects and challenges trying to escape the weight of past histories: autonomy, punk, new social movements.

In many countries those years were marked by an eagerness to debate and to theorise in ways which took advantage of the new freedom. One result was a proliferation of new journals, while many older ones were profoundly altered by the new wave of political and theoretical enthusiasm.

But while postmodernism may have pointed towards the end of modernism, it did not conclude it. The hopes placed in modernist enlightenment were lost, the conditions of modernism remained. Capitalism in the '80s proved to be more successful, more encompassing than ever before. The energies of the "patchwork of minorities", the rainbow of coalitions, the new social movements, all proved to be puny in comparison to its power.

Often the journals, like Australia's *Art and Text*, or West Germany's *Konkursbuch*, have proved more tenacious, and their "critical theory" remains indispensable. England, unfortunately, is still very weak in publications which address a readership concerned with ideas and politics or which transcend the conventional boundaries of academic disciplines. The gap left by the disappearance of *Ideology and Consciousness*, for example, has not been filled.

October, with its subtitle "Art/Theory/Criticism/Politics", is one of the most distinctive American journals. *The First Decade* anthology brings together a range of essays and other contributions under headings like Historical Materialism, Psychoanalysis and The Body. But its starting point, like the journal's, is Art — or rather the critique of the conventions of art production and the institutions of art exhibition and distribution.

Just how materially powerful art can be is developed in an outstanding essay by Rosalyn Deutsche and Cara Gendel Ryan on "The Fine Art of Gentrification" on Manhattan's Lower East Side. Art in New York, they point out, is a billion-dollar business, and that inevitably produces effects beyond gallery walls and glossy magazines.

Deutsche and Ryan examine the role of galleries and bohemia as the cutting edge of a rise in property values in a low-income area, a gentrification which "systematically destroys the material conditions for the survival of millions of people." They are also scathing on the way art criticism functions "to exploit the neighbourhood for its bohemian or sensationalist connotations [it was

once notorious as Hell's Kitchen] while deflecting attention away from underlying social, economic and political processes." Processes which mean the displacement of the local population, part of which swells the number of homeless.

It could be added that in the age of Reagan and Thatcher there is little attempt to conceal such consequences. The homeless appear as a necessary, spectacular proof that the *cure* is working. There cannot be winners without losers.

Almost every one of more than twenty pieces in the anthology repays close reading. A conversation with the artist Hans Haacke, for example, draws out the way he devises work appropriate to particular problems and places rather than operating within a distinctive style. A comment by one of the interviewers can, with a little license perhaps, be turned against some recent discussion on the British left: "You identified style as one of the enemies; you understood style as a category born of idealism, as a fundamentally nonhistorical way of thinking." In an eloquent elegy on Pasolini, Maria-Antonietta Macciocchi angrily attacks the timid moralism of the left. A brief, but illuminating piece by Homi Bhaba on "colonial discourse" uncovers an ambivalence which also affects other forms of imperial power. The colonised are called upon to mimic their masters. Yet this mimicry is not only a mark of inferiority, it is also a threat: the "mimic men" are "almost the same, but not white."

October's limitations can be discerned in several contributions, and are suggested by its name — taken, say the editors, from Eisenstein's film. They see the title as emblematic "of a specific historical moment in which artistic practice joined with critical theory in the project of social construction." But isn't Eisenstein's *October* actually a monument to the *suppression* of revolution, a rewriting of history which closes off that very "cultural revolution" whose heritage the journal wants to assume? Doesn't the film appeal to the "bad side" of any radical audience, to a suspension of doubt? Is it a coincidence that a footnote to some jottings by Eisenstein, reprinted in the anthology, explains "makhnovshchina" as follows: "The reference is to the *counter-revolutionary* episodes in the Ukraine under the leadership of Makhno." (my italics)

In this respect *October* displays elements of a late-flowering intellectual Maoism, something which can be seen in the inflexible attitude towards class in the gentrification essay, which by-passes the complicated inter-relationships of rich and poor in the metropolis. It appears, too, in the journal's influential, but essentially dogmatic, dismissal of figuration in art. The editors seem close to believing that the rise of figurative painting was entirely the result of a manipulation of the art market by the galleries aided by neo-conservative critics!

Nonetheless, *October*, anthology and journal, is admirable. There's precious little in Britain which approaches its combination of intellectual range and polemical vigour. A passage quoted by Macciocchi from Pasolini's last piece of writing both reflects something of *October's* stance and aptly addresses our own present needs: "Quickly forget successes and continue about your business in a stubborn, contradictory, demanding, wilful way, undistinguished, setting snares, and speaking evil. . . ." □



"I don't go in for ego trips. . ."

"I don't go in for ego trips. . ."

"I don't go in for ego trips. . ."

HIS MASTER'S VOICE

Love me, love my book

Francis Wheen

WHY IS ROBERT MAXWELL bullying booksellers? On last Friday's *News at Ten* he gave a characteristically pugnacious answer. Even a rich man, Maxwell boomed, is entitled to protect his reputation.

On the very same ITN bulletin we saw another rich man, Lord Spens, emerging from Bow Street magistrates court having been remanded on £500,000 bail on charges connected with the Guinness scandal. There's no suggestion that Maxwell was involved in any Guinness skulduggery, of course, but the juxtaposition did have a certain piquancy nevertheless — especially for those few viewers who knew that Lord Spens is Maxwell's former financial adviser. Small world, eh?

Robert Maxwell is a publisher, yet he has devoted much time and money to suppressing books and terrorising booksellers. In 1966, in a famous obscenity case, he gave evidence against *Last Exit to Brooklyn*, expressing his horror that publishers could "disseminate this kind of muck for profit"; fewer than two years later he tried desperately to buy the *News of the World*, which is well known for its reluctance to disseminate muck for profit. Commentators often paint him as "a man of contradictions". A blunter way of putting it is that he's a gigantic hypocrite.

His interests have been many and varied, from the I'm Backing Britain Campaign (a 1968 struggle whose 20th anniversary is being celebrated by nobody) to Oxford United FC. But what they have in common is that they have groaned under the weight of a man whose ego has swollen like some monstrous tumour.

Last September, for instance, he changed the name of the British Printing and Communications Corporation to the Maxwell Communications Corporation. "It's not an ego trip," he said. "I don't go in for ego trips. It's not my style. It was a decision reluctantly taken. I was forced into it by my colleagues." Less than a month later the new

Maxwell Communications Corporation issued a glossy bulletin to staff. Its eight pages included nine large photographs of Robert Maxwell.

And now comes the book. There are 84 photographs of Robert Maxwell in *Maxwell*, which is written by an employee of Maxwell (Joe Haines) and published by a Maxwell company (Macdonald) at £12.95. Joe Haines' fee was paid directly by Maxwell, rather than by the publishers. The book is even "Copyright © 1988 Robert Maxwell". Haines seemed surprised last week when I suggested that it was pretty odd for copyright in a biography to remain with its subject. "Is it? It's the first biography I've written," he told me. "Anyway, I don't give a damn."

His 526-page volume — dedicated to Betty Maxwell, Bob's wife — was researched, written and printed in six months flat as a spoiler for the two unofficial biographies. Of *Maxwell: A Portrait of Power* by Peter Thompson and Anthony Delano (Bantam, £12.95), Haines sneers: "My researcher counted 109 errors in the first 111 pages of it, at which point we stopped counting." He takes Tom Bower's *Maxwell the Outsider* (Aurum, £12.95) more seriously. Even so, "if my book stood against Tom Bower then mine would win hands down. Fact for fact, mine is more factually correct."

A likely story. Bruce Page, who supervised the *Sunday Times*' exposés of Maxwell in the late 1960s, tells Thompson and Delano: "We came to realise we were dealing with a man who did not have a commonplace perception of what might constitute a fact." Haines seems to have inherited the trait from his mentor. He doesn't tell lies. He simply omits to mention rather a lot.

Take the famous libel suit against *Private Eye*. Haines writes that the magazine's offer of an out-of-court settlement "was not acceptable to Maxwell and he determined to let a jury decide." Not quite right: in fact, just before the case began, Maxwell offered the *Eye* an out-of-court settlement. The magazine (foolishly, as it turned out) rejected the suggestion, preferring to have its day in court.

Still, one has to salute Haines' achievement in producing such an unblemished hagiography. Maxwell's career has been bumpier than most and the loyal servant could easily have tripped on one

of the more prominent crags. But he picks his way over them with the agility of a mountain goat. There is Simpkin Marshall, the publishing wholesaler run by Maxwell which went bust in the 1950s soon after he had assured all and sundry that it was thriving. A post mortem discovered some very fancy footwork by Maxwell in the account-books. (Nothing illegal, of course.) Haines blamed it all on the publishing industry: "Maxwell's ambitions for Simpkin Marshall were huge, but their weakness was that they depended upon the wholehearted cooperation of British publishers."

Then there is the Pergamon scandal of the 1960s, involving yet more legerdemain in the profit and loss account, which led to the famous conclusion by Department of Trade inspectors that Maxwell "is not in our opinion a person who can be relied on to exercise proper stewardship of a publicly-quoted company". Haines dismisses the DoT report as "substantially flawed". More recently, there is the *London Daily News*. Against the advice of its editor, Maxwell decided just before launch to make it a "24-hour paper" and thereby sealed its fate. Haines, magnificently, says this was the editor's fault: he "should have resisted".

After 500-odd pages of this nonsense it is a relief to turn to the unofficial books. To judge by Maxwell's furious efforts to suppress them you might think they contained some dread secret — exposing him as a KGB agent, perhaps. Nothing of the sort. They point out his shortcomings but, on the whole, both are remarkably generous — too generous, perhaps, to a man whose vanity is so gross that he seems to regard anything short of adulation as a libel. Bower is admirably thorough, though his financial analysis is sometimes heavy-going because of the very complexity of Maxwell's financial juggling. Thompson and Delano are thinner on investigation, but their narrative is stuffed with good anecdotes, including several about the official biographer:

After he had retired as political editor of the *Daily Mirror*, Terry Lancaster encountered Haines at the Gay Hussar.

"Saw you on television, Joe," said Lancaster heartily.

"Question Time?" asked Haines, who had just appeared on that current affairs programme.

"No, the nine o'clock news. You were carrying Maxwell's bags at Glasgow airport." □

THERAPY

The door's open

Yiannis Gabriel

Asylum to Anarchy

CLAIRE BARON *Free Association* £27.50 and £9.95

THIS IS A FASCINATING story: the study of a therapeutic community, a day-hospital, in which all institutional rules and procedures and all bureaucratic power were systematically replaced by group psychoanalysis. What happened is highly instructive.

The community emerged from a cross-fertilisation of the psychoanalytic tradition, with its search for unconscious meanings in all kinds of social and individual behaviour, and the anti-psychiatry movement of the 1960s, with its emphasis on community care. Traditional therapy has been criticised by Goffman and others for relying on drug and shock treatment, as well as strict bureaucratic controls, to achieve the social adaptation of patients. By contrast, the day hospital aimed at "cure through self-understanding" by providing occupational therapy and small and large group therapy in a generally supportive and relaxed environment.

In the early 1970s, patients and staff united successfully to fight the proposed closure of their hospital. This marked the start of a new era, one in which the Medical Director emerged as a charismatic leader and the institution underwent a progressive "destructuring". An open-door policy was adopted in which admission, assessment and discharge procedures, along with other rules and regulations, were abandoned. Records ceased to be kept, staff meetings were ended and therapy became centred on the "large group".

One rule only remained: that everyone and every matter happening in the hospital should be brought to the large group, which met in the large-group room and was theoretically in operation whenever people were present.

The large group recognised no divisions of staff and patient, no agenda, no beginning and end, no distinction between practical and therapeutic matters — all was submitted to the same treatment: interpretation, the search for the truth. The request by patients for a replacement cleaner, for example, was treated as a symptom of their pathology ("being unable to cope with the muck inside") rather than as a matter meriting action. No new cleaner was recruited and attempts by individual patients or staff to clean and tidy the place were severely admonished. In a classic Catch 22, "the medical director was quoted as saying that if a patient could clean up after them all, he needed no medical certificate."

"Psychoanalysis" emerged as the dominant ideology, both the instrument and the symbol of the MD's power; he was regarded as omnipotent and omniscient, a true miracle-man whose "miracle-making took the form of the 'correct' psychoanalytic interpretations". In the absence of bureaucratic rules, "psychoanalytic interpretations . . . were marshalled to control behaviour".

Far from a benevolent dictatorship, the day hospital gradually turned into a régime of terror and oppression: in a classic psychoanalytic double bind, any opposition to an interpretation, whether it came from a patient or a member of staff, was seen as the ultimate proof of the interpretation's correctness. Finally, if the patients did not like the psychotherapeutic treatment on offer, they could always return to their slow deaths through drugs and shock treatment.

Claire Baron skilfully untangles mechanisms developed by the staff for reinforcing their control. Non-acknowledgement of a patient's utterance ("the blank screen response") was developed into a fine art. Jokes aimed at excluding particular individuals, inane metaphors, incomprehensible jargon and, above all, an endless reductionism to penis envy were elements of a technology of thought control aimed at dissolving patients' identity. Baron aptly compares the day hospital with Chinese brain-washing camps. The devastating effect of false confession on the individual is a key device of all tyrannies — its importance was not lost on those running the day hospital.

Through the pages of this illuminating if over-long book, the power of an ideology of pseudo-psychoanalysis is laid bare. It is ironic that the culmination of the book is the ritual re-enactment of the primordial murder: the crisis and eventual rebellion of the patients triggered by the unilateral withdrawal of meal provisions. After a succession of inquiries, the director was sacked by the Area Health Authority and banned from the NHS. Within a couple of years the hospital was closed. Zealots of the approach would no doubt see in it the ultimate proof of the truth of their treatments.

Had Baron not given the game away earlier, this would have provided a formidable resolution to a gripping psychological thriller. But her purpose is different: to show how, far from leading to a democratic haven in which psychotherapy could genuinely enable the individual to understand and come to terms with him/herself, the abandonment of bureaucratic rules led to a tyranny of the therapeutic. Baron's book does not examine whether this was inevitable, but is a powerful warning against the serious dangers which arise from the abuse of psychoanalysis and of psychotherapeutic power. □

Yiannis Gabriel is the author of Freud and Society (Routledge).

FATHERBACKS

Survive and protect

Jenny Diski

ALL NARRATIVE bears witness. People tell other people what they know. It's probably what caused us to develop language in the first place. There's an obligation that we all obliquely feel to listen to what people have to say. And I don't think that understanding the way the world is is necessarily the object of telling and listening: even when the story complicates the world beyond comprehension there is still a human connection made, like an electrical impulse leaping the gap between synapses.

Stories of genocide do not enlarge our understanding. Hearing them, we are left aghast, with only words like *madness* and *evil* to describe, but not explain, the events. But when the survivors speak, we listen. Someth May speaks in **Cambodian Witness** (Faber, £4.95) of life under the regime of the Khmer Rouge. During the years 1975 to 1979 he watched seven members of his family die and lived through torture, starvation and the terror of being, at every moment, on the brink of death. His determination to survive was rooted in his need to tell the story of Pol Pot's time to the next generation, as his father had told traditional tales of Cambodia to him.

What strikes you most is the murderously gleeful logic of his tormentors. Men and women were shot for saying "please" and "thank you" when addressing their captors because the words had been abolished as symbols of class repression. So you died if you used them; even normal politeness was rendered lethal. People were refused permission to stay with their dying children instead of going to work in the fields. "Why, are you a doctor?" the Khmer Rouge guards would laugh. If the answer was no, there was no point in staying; if yes, you were shot. Doctors were class enemies.

In **Winter in the Morning** (Pavanne, £3.95) Janina Bauman relates her experiences as a girl in the Warsaw ghetto. Again, her family and friends die and disappear and, again, she lives so that the story of what happened can be told. She hides her diary in the rubble when she hears a doctor tell her mother that she's dying. The diary *must* survive. She and her mother and sister escape registration for the death camps, but this means they will be shot on sight if they're found. They hide out for two years in Warsaw, living precariously in daytime silence, never going out, at the mercy of humanitarian or acquisitive others. Once or twice she puts the family at risk because she is 16 and wants to know she is alive. Once she flirts with a man, once she goes to a dance. On both occasions death comes even closer. It's painful to read; more painful, I imagine, to have to remember.

Ellen Gilchrist's heroines know pain too. In her collection of short stories **Drunk with Love** (Faber, £3.95) they drink too much, over eat, exchange media success for sex with their chauffeurs. They buy mail-order companions and die for the energy of rough, alien men they can't control. All the kinds of things that any of us might get up to — but Gilchrist's women mostly suffer from wealth. Theirs may be a purer pain, or anguish without excuse, but it takes a leap of faith to acknowledge the anguish of the rich. It's Scott Fitzgerald land, the prose cool and smooth but with a touch too much flavour of the Creative Writing School for my taste. I really preferred the sharper realities of Yuko Tsushima's **The Shooting Gallery** (Women's Press, £3.95). The women are left alone with children, mistaking dreams of the sea for other dreams they cannot name. The pain here is quieter, woven between bonds of duty and the contradictions of love and resentment.

Another literary lady detective, a first from Joan Smith. **A Masculine Ending** (Faber, £3.95) has disappearing bodies, missing structuralist dons, and a smooth narrative. There's an interesting focus on the motives of the heroine's quest for the truth. The untangling of the mystery and her own increasing entanglement in the lives of those

involved is nicely done.

Barbara Lazear Ascher is a wife and mother, passionately and unapologetically involved in her roles. In this collection of journalism, **Playing After Dark** (Fontana, £2.95), she declares her interests. She's committed to love, frankly jealous, touched by and scared for her adolescent daughter. In her interview with Eudora Welty, she proves also to be a good listener. There's no rage here, but plenty of interesting thoughts about this and that.

"Fact or fiction? You must decide," orders the press release for **Communion** by Whitley Strieber (Arrow, £3.50). Which is, I reckon, having it both ways. If it's fiction, it's not very good, and this strikes me as the only ground for deciding it's fact. The perplexed sincerity of Mr Strieber could argue for either side. He has, apparently, been whisked off by aliens on and off since he was five. They keep turning up in the middle of the night and taking him away for tests. Mostly they seem interested in his forebrain and his penis. The UFO operating theatre sounds less than hygienic and, worse than that, the small bug-eyed people don't appear to be very bright. They try to put him at his ease by wearing double-breasted demob suits, decades out of date. You'd think an advanced civilisation would manage to get hold of a recent copy of *Men in Vogue*. There are others who have suffered similarly. Strieber joins a self-help group of fellow abductees. It seems the men get female aliens, the women, male. A final argument, I'd say, for at least hoping the thing is fictional: we've got problems enough without being invaded by homophobic rapists. □

FICTION

Heir to the flesh

Scott Bradfield

The Wedding

YANN QUEFFÉLEC trans. LINDA COVERDALE
Secker £10.95

IT MAY HAVE BEEN André Maurois who suggested that our two most unforgiveable inventions were gunpowder and romantic love. Gunpowder can damage the flesh, but romantic love makes flesh unable to enjoy what small pleasures it is heir to.

The notion that the individual only finds him or herself by discovering vaster organic unity in the arms of some perfect mate makes people feel rather cheated if all they can manage is mere human affection, familial commitment, even good sex. By eliminating any trace of this sentimentality from his excellent novel *The Wedding*, Yann Queffélec explores both the tragedy of the often transcendent expectations of men and women as well as the twisted, perverse beauty of human suffering. This is a remarkable work, relating desperate and often cruel events not with cynicism or pathos but with cool, almost clinical disaffection.

The novel's original French title, literally "the barbaric marriage", refers to the brutal rape of a 13-year-old girl with which the novel opens.



If you were standing for President, how would you promote your cause? Pop videos? Superannuated comedians on your platform? You'd almost certainly fall back on those electoral stand-bys, lapel badges. Roger A. Fischer's **TIPPECANOE & TRINKETS TOO** (University of Illinois Press, 54 East Gregory Drive, Champagne, Illinois, 61820, USA, \$38.45) is a history of "the material culture of American presidential campaigns, 1828-1984", in which lapel badges play a dominant role. Amongst the very first campaign artefacts in America, at the beginning of the 19th century, were engraved safety razors. By the 1840s, "the politics of popular amusement" comes of age, the "carnivalisation" of US politics begins. Chimney covers, cigarette lighters, earmuffs, miniature wind-socks, canned drinks, even campaign edibles were put at the service of Presidential hopefuls. In modern times, post-Watergate legislation and the pre-eminence of TV have combined to limit the use of such material culture, but they haven't put paid to ingenuity — a 1984 Reagan button had flashing lights and played the National Anthem — or vulgarity — a 1980 Jimmy Carter doll featured an erect penis in the shape of a peanut (not illustrated, unfortunately). Whatever you feel about the carnivalisation, it's hard to imagine the British political scene yielding such a variety of imaginative, foolish, tasteless or downright insulting baubles. (Nick Kimberley)

Because the author relates his story without sentimentality, the sentimentality of his characters seems by relation more tragic and profound. Will, the young American soldier with whom the girl Nicole has fallen in love, is first met by the reader in Nicole's passionate imagination. Nicole remembers his "dancing green eyes" on the night they first kissed, "the rustle of the wind through the pines behind them, the mild night decked out in the stars and the lights twinkling down by the sea". Nicole's subsequent and violent rape at the hands of Will and two of his friends proves to be her first and, for a long time, only lesson in the ultimate value of "love".

This lesson informs Nicole's notions of both romantic and family love, just as it systematically undermines her illegitimate son, Ludo. Locked away in the attic of his grandparents' home as a family shame, Ludo knows love only as a sort of feverish dream. Visited only sparingly by his Aunt Nanette (who ritually reads to him from the romantic journeys of *The Little Prince*), Ludo dreams of his fulfilment in whatever banal attention he hopes some day to elicit from Nicole. Nicole, however, avoids what she sees in Ludo's always alert eyes — the "barbaric" night of his conception.

Like Simenon, Queffélec depicts the surfeited interior passion of people and the thin, forlorn walls of the real world by which it is frustrated and contained. But, despite its tragic story, *The Wedding* is never dismal or simply horrifying. Each sentence is hard, weighted and edged, like something sculpted in wood.

The world's violence often becomes more than mere events; born and nurtured in the right climate, it becomes a condition. It fills the places where love doesn't operate and thus makes love itself seem something frightening and terrible. It is not surprising, then, that Ludo only discovers the semblance of a home and "father" in an abandoned ship owned by a convicted rapist and that, when he finally meets someone who says she loves him, a young girl named Amandine, he is immediately suspected of being a rapist himself by the girl's mother.

Unlike Romanticism, Queffélec's novel never seeks to regain any "lost unity," so Ludo travels aimlessly forward through its course, always looking back towards home but never achieving it. His strange psychic journey seems always to be taking him into newer, more uncertain territories which are described with remarkable clarity and restraint. This is a novel of great power and beauty. □



Roger Rees and, *Deo gratias*, Felicity Kendal in *Hapgood*

Whodunnit? Whocares?

Twenty years ago, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern jolted the British theatre — and, since then, the reputation of playwright Tom Stoppard has only grown stronger. But his new play Hapgood, says VICTORIA RADIN, is no sudden faltering of power

WE ALL NEED heroes, even among playwrights; and a proportion of critics, beholding Tom Stoppard's new play, have been inclined to dress it up in the emperor's new clothes. Or, perhaps, in his old

clothes, since the former monarch of metaphor hasn't written a play to equal his early *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* (1967), *Jumpers* (1972) and *Travesties* (1974).

Inexorably, through a failure of nerve or need or inclination or inspiration, the full-length stage works following *Travesties* have declined: from the Shavian presentational style of *Night and Day*, to the attitudinising and clichéd emotions of *The Real Thing*, to *Hapgood* (at the Aldwych theatre), a skeletal exercise in tricks for tricks' sake that doesn't succeed even on Stoppard's recent terms of the West End play. These are harsh words but fair when one remembers the integration of thought

and character and emotion and structure, full of fun and even meaning, of the early dramas.

Hapgood plays as an intentional exercise, written by an iron will. One senses a grimness and a lack of love for both the artefact and its audience: there are no oases, no dreamy divagations into lateral thinking. I felt got at: and yet it all seemed slack and purposeless under its swift hard words. Stoppard, as everyone else, is not immune to the bleakness of Britain in the late 1980s, its affectlessness. The tone here, as the method, is harsh and ugly. All it can find in the way of emotional good news is the sad love of a single mother for her distant son.

It begins promisingly, in the men's room of a municipal swimming pool, the first of Carl Toms' seven barely-coloured settings, in which handsome but rather too solid facades are flown down. A voice-over directs movements on a huge, lighted map while, in dumb-show, to Bach and jazz, several men slam rapidly in and out of cubicles, depositing or picking up a leather briefcase, giving signals with a towel, appearing in various forms of dress, while one shaves his face noncommittally. Stop. Enter, from the shower stall, Felicity Kendal, in a Burberry and holding a pink umbrella. She speaks into a cellular phone. It is brilliantly choreographed by director Peter Wood. It is the evening's sole example of larkiness.

It is also one of the few moments in the play when anything actually happens. Structurally, everything that follows is an attempt to explain the events of that first wordless scene, during which, apparently, an important scientific tape got away to the Russians. Felicity Kendal (*Hapgood*) is the head of a British counter intelligence agency. She has been ratted on by one of her own men. There is quickly a lot of talk of Ridley: but who, one asks at this juncture, is Ridley? We next go to a zoo where Blair (Nigel Hawthorne, in his ultra-suave *Yes Minister* mode) is suspecting his Russian-born agent, Kerner (Roger Rees). This, as in all scenes where Kerner appears, is less an exchange than a lecture. Kerner supplies Blair by way of answer with what I take to be a swift thrash around quantum mechanics: that, as light can be either particles or waves, so "The art of observing determines the reality" and, therefore, a double agent is like a trick of the light. Time stands still while Rees delivers his monologue, with only a few desultory interjections from Blair, in his curious and naturally alienating RRRussian accent. The play lunges on to the school (the liberal St Christopher's, for the sociologically-minded) where *Hapgood* boards her young son: further cut and thrust between *Hapgood* and Blair about who, among the team, dunnit.

The following scenes throw out some scanty information about Kerner and the marginally more fulsome but still niggardly and wholly implausible news that *Hapgood*'s son is the product of an affair with the Russian, whom she still "loves". *Hapgood* sets herself up as her sister to trap Ridley — or, as several critics believed, there is a real *Hapgood* double; there may or may not be the attempted kidnapping of her son; after a loud shoot-out, Ridley (or his twin) is despatched.

This action-packed summary does not account

for the feeling one gets of stasis, even paralysis. It's as if Stoppard had become glued to one spot and was continually trying to heave himself forward. On a purely intellectual level, I realised that one of Stoppard's lost ideas is that we are all, as it were, twins of ourselves: in the terms of espionage, we are every one our own counter-spy. It was also possible to discern that the entire play was meant to be a demonstration of the analogy between quantum physics and spying: another Stoppardian excursus into the world of relativities. However, this idea was in no way subsumed into the structure of the play: it remained a metaphor only at the most literal level. John Le Carré has been invoked; but Agatha Christie (not for the first time with Stoppard) is a more likely model. The play is an attempt to identify the perpetrator of a deed by one of a closed community. But both the deed and the community remain ciphers. What we see is the spectacle of people being worked up over something we can't share.

Thank God — the great thrower of dice in the Stoppardian world (who is missing here) — for Felicity Kendal. Although in this role she dons a low, growly stage-voice along with her hard-edged little grey suit and medium-high heels, her natural warmth — and what I hope is not insulting to describe as a quality of ordinariness — light up her portrayal of a hyperbole late-1980s sort of *Cosmo* career tough cookie who leads the men in their Mensa-esque trials of ingenuity but retains a womanly vulnerability when it comes to mothering. The first scene between mother and son is the second best in the play. Inside the new Stoppard is a naturalist longing to get out: no longer a prince of metaphor but perhaps the emperor of ice cream. □



Under the sun

Harriet Evans

The Big Parade
ICA

VAST EXPANSES of concrete under a suffocating midday sun; parallel lines of wooden beds with identically folded army quilts; hundreds of khaki knapsacks, hung on evenly spaced pegs; gleaming rifles in hard lines pointing up at a white hot sky; rows and rows of steel-tipped boots echoing on a training ground. . .

Chen Kaige's second feature, *The Big Parade*, might come as a surprise after the strange and enigmatic beauty of his 1984 *Yellow Earth*. The theme alone is different enough. Set in the training camp of the Airborne Divisions of the People's Liberation Army in early 1984, hundreds of volunteers, mostly young recruits, compete for the glory of participating in the National Day parades in the capital. Some don't survive the harsh discipline. Jiang Junbiao, a former soldier on the Vietnam front, tries to straighten his bow legs by tying them together at night: the result is insomnia and such pain that he cannot endure the relentless pace of the training. Li Weicheng, a squad leader who has never seen active service, suffers from

frequent blackouts and decides to withdraw from the competition even though it is his last chance for promotion. Another recruit, a failed university applicant, rebels against the futile rigours of army life before turning out to be the squad's prize soldier.

Although *The Big Parade* provoked the wrath of the Chinese army, it is neither spectacular nor sensational. It makes few concessions to the audience; the script is frugal; there is not, in conventional terms, very much of a story. Nevertheless, it is a powerful and memorable film, which bears the unmistakable mark of the team that made *Yellow Earth*. The same ethereal quality is there, conveyed through a similar use of space. Silence and sparsity evoke a similar sense of distance, even timelessness. Oddly contrasting individuals weave their aspirations and fears into their surroundings with a subtle simplicity. Hao Xiaoyuan, a simple peasant boy, decides that the pursuit of glory, however brief, is a better way of showing filial respect for his dead mother than returning home on leave. The 16-year-old Liu Guoqiang, the joker of the squad, succumbs to sunstroke after three gruelling hours of standing to attention under the midday sun. He wanders off in delirium into the nearby fields and re-emerges in the camp hospital with the introspection of someone suddenly pushed into adulthood. And Sun Fang, the demanding drill instructor, finds that his loyalty to Jiang Junbiao for saving his life on the Vietnam border conflicts with the requirements of military duty.

The film is certainly a critique of such national virtues as patriotism and collective spirit. The speech that Li Weicheng gives to the squad on the eve of their departure for the capital is telling. "They used to say that good men don't become soldiers . . . some people say we are fools." And many in post-Mao China would agree: collective discipline and glory appear slightly ludicrous when described in statistical form. Nine thousand, nine hundred and ninety-three kilometres marched by each individual recruit; six tons of nails hammered into four pairs of boots each: all for a mere 96 steps on the day of the parade. Meanwhile, oblique yet frequent references to Chinese casualties in the 1979 border war with Vietnam suggest that harsh training for ceremonial purposes might not be all that an army needs.

The film goes further than this, though. It is also more than a metaphor for life in China, as Chen Kaige described it. It is a sensitive study of what makes an individual tick when coerced into rigorous uniformity. It is also a critical study of the group dynamics and commitment that still belong to China's political rhetoric.

No wonder that the army's anger was aroused. Indeed, the film was blocked for more than a year until Chen Kaige agreed to modify it before its final release in 1987. The original ending was of a deserted Square of Heavenly Peace, with just the sound of the parade. What we now see is more banal: squads marching in impressive unison, slow motion, to the strains of the national anthem, eyes turned right towards the imposing gates of the Forbidden City. Stirring stuff, which moved one member of the audience to sit forward in her seat and clap in rhythm, but not what Chen Kaige and Zhang Yimou intended.

The film has flaws besides this artificial ending. The shimmering effects, the voice-overs and use of

slow motion add little of value, while a tendency towards the sentimental in some of the acting doesn't fit easily with the mood of detachment that pervades most of the film. But these are not serious faults. Much of the photography is stunning, particularly in its use of symmetry and sharp line. Static shots are cleverly used with the confidence of someone who knows his talents. The film is a worthy testimony to the versatility of Chen Kaige and to the exceptional cinematographic talent of Zhang Yimou. Controversy may oblige China's fifth generation of film makers to modify and appease, but their imagination and vitality continue. □



Reel lives

Julian Petley

The first of our new monthly video columns on the wealth of material coming from independent producers looks at the labour movement video magazine Northern Newsreel

NORTHERN NEWSREEL is produced by Trade Films, a particularly active film and television workshop based in Gateshead. Supported by Channel 4, the British Film Institute and the local authority, Trade Films is specially franchised by the ACTT as a production-based, non-profit-distributing organisation which enables independent film and video makers to work under union approved conditions of pay and employment. The area boasts two other such workshops — Amber (whose *T. Dan Smith* was recently seen on Channel 4's *Eleventh Hour* slot) and Swingbridge. All the workshops are closely linked to the North East Media Development Council and the North East Media Training Centre (see NS 24 July 1987) whose aim is to consolidate regional production based on the premise of the independent sector's value as a growth industry in an area of high unemployment.

According to *Northern Newsreel* producer Martin Spence the idea of the regular video magazine is "to take issues of national political significance and then to illustrate them by particular reference to specific events in the North East. So although our main focus is always on regional issues that are of concern to the labour movement our approach isn't exclusively regional."

The delicate balance between national and local is well illustrated by the current newsreel, number nine in the series. It starts with an item about the decline of the health and safety at work inspectorate under the Tories, and the corresponding rise in the number of injuries in the workplace. The general point is then illustrated by a visit to a building site in the company of the Darlington safety officer who points out an alarming number of potential hazards, followed by a trip to a grim looking chemical factory with a shop steward who explains the danger to health posed by chrome-related problems. The item concludes by stating the TUC's health and safety demands.

Next, a school party's outing to the Captain

Cook museum becomes the starting point for a discussion of the absence of black heroes and heroines from school history books. *Northern Newsreel* has always been particularly concerned with issues of racism. In fact the very first tape (spring 1986) opened with a consideration of racism in the North East and the eighth (winter 1987) contained a lengthy extract from *The People's Account* — a documentary on the uprising at Broadwater Farm made by the black workshop Ceddo. IBA demands for cuts and "balance" are still preventing this film from being shown on Channel 4 as originally planned.

The most impressive item in the newsreel — indeed one of the best things Trade Films have ever done — begins as a Russian news report from Chernobyl two years after the disaster. Very subtly, however, we then move to a fictional Russian TV news reporter covering the fictional evacuation of Teeside after the nuclear power station at Hartlepool has done a fictional Chernobyl. Two years on the reporter returns — because of inadequate evacuation procedures many of the survivors, one of whom is very convincingly "interviewed" at the bedside of her sick child (shades of *The War Game*), have leukaemia, and the whole area has become an uninhabited wasteland. (The fact that the de-industrialised parts of Teeside already look like post nuclear landscapes is an irony which won't be lost on many viewers). With limited means, this little docu-drama manages to conjure a remarkably convincing atmosphere, and its message is amply reinforced by the closing titles which inform us that the evacuation zone around Hartlepool has recently been reduced from 5km to 1km (even at 5km Britain still had the smallest evacuation zones of any western country).

Northern Newsreel works by subscription. As Martin Spence explains, "At the moment we have over 40 subscribers — trade unions, party branches and other local groups — so it's hard to estimate viewing figures, though these must run into thousands. The videos are meant to be viewed collectively and to serve as triggers for discussion. Video is ideal for the purpose because it's so flexible at both production and consumption points."

It's certainly an excellent idea — not simply because the overwhelming anti-Labour, anti-union bias of so much of the media makes alternative sources of news a virtual necessity for the left, but also because of the films' value as springboards for further debate. The fact that the focus is at least partly on the North East shouldn't really deter users in other parts of the country since the issues raised are of such general concern. For example, number eight looks at no-strike and single-union agreements, the press attacks on "loony left" councils, and the lessons that black trade unionists in South Africa can teach their counterparts in this country. Number six contains a five-minute political drama which examines an exchange of letters between a Chilean exile in the North East and her daughter in Chile; number five includes a particularly interesting item in which activists and ex-soldiers from both sides talk about the Falklands/Malvinas conflict five years after the end of hostilities.

Ideally, perhaps, what is needed is some kind of centrally-produced "alternative" newsreel into which regional groups could then slot various items of local relevance. However, that's probably asking rather too much of a sector that's already

short on resources thanks to government policies which have hit hard their traditional sources of support. But financial stringencies notwithstanding, *Northern Newsreel* have kept to their target of producing four issues a year and have recently won a prestigious Royal Television Society award. They seem to have worried the other side too; the *Financial Times* warned that *Northern Newsreel*'s example "should make the right wing sit up and take notice; because video is becoming the medium of the left, providing a direct channel of communication with the electorate". Precisely, and that's one of the reasons why the NS is devoting a regular column to it. □

Northern Newsreel is available from Trade Films, 36 Bottle Bank, Gateshead, Tyne and Wear NE8 2AR. Phone 091 477 3604.

If you've made a video you'd like discussed in this column please send a copy to Julian Petley at the NS.

Two poems by Andrew Greig

Fishing

He may love her when
he does not say "I love you" then
hang on her reply. Who
does not go fishing
with such lines? Across the livingroom
her wrist flicks, the hook digs in.

In the kitchen he is floundering.
Who knows when
to cut the line? The water runs
more clearly here today;
he twists a tap and sees
down to the bottom.

Leaving coffee at her side,
drift into the garden.

Gulf

Nothing is missing, said she
on White Wisp, the world turns and we
turn with it, not losing touch.
I'll always love you and but
In the Gulf
a destroyer lowered its defensive screen
for a chat — men were blown away.

Sorry pal, we didn't mean. . .
The plane flew back to base
in some confusion;
soon she did too.
Men yearn, metal gapes, verses implode
memory and daily news. Between I & I
the holy wars elide; between us flew

lovely, misguided, direct,
words like love, like Exocet.

Andrew Greig's most recent solo collection of poems, *Surviving Passages*, is published by Canongate.

DANCE

Taming the wilderness

Stephanie Jordan

With his latest creation, Still Life at the Penguin Café, choreographer David Bintley tries yet again to fight his way through the cobwebs of the Royal Ballet. Does he have the strength to make it?

DAVID BINTLEY, the creative force chosen to power the Royal Ballet's future, has done all the right things. Rising through the ranks of company and school, and therefore a known and knowing quantity, he rapidly instructed himself in the diverse skills of past masters — the comic, the serious, the narrative, the abstract, the academic, the one-acter, the three-acter — and he's only 30. He has amassed a creditable list of honours and awards on the way, both as choreographer and character dancer.

Bintley was an obvious choice for promotion from the Sadler's Wells Royal Ballet to the Royal Ballet as Resident Choreographer two years ago. Versatility and good behaviour apart, he is a true choreographer, far more so than most of his RB colleagues — Ashley Page excepted. Forget for now his essays into narrative, myth and symbol, especially the tortuous three-act epics *The Snow Queen* and *The Swan of Tuonela* (stories tend to dry up his choreographic language), and turn to the pure dance works that release his real capacity to make movement. Ballets of this kind have been presented earlier this season: *Allegri Diversi* for the SWRB and *Galanteries* for the RB (televised at Christmas). In these, Bintley is undeniably fluent, clever at concocting dance phrases, adept in the magement of people in space, ingenious with the odd new step and a canny craftsman when it comes to the larger construction of a piece. Lately, he's been demonstrating a newly acquired rhythmic acuity, creating vitality by crossing accents and making lively conversations between music and dance.

But there is a deeper, more subtle reason for the Bintley success story. He has understood better than most of his peers that it is wise to look for creative impetus beyond the RB tradition, to escape the safety and containment of the Ashton/de Valois environment. However wonderfully he may have done it, Sir Fred has always concerned himself with the poetic, romantic and aristocratic past, rather than dirtying his hands in the present. MacMillan, the current Principal Choreographer of the RB, also made ballets in the spirit of a previous era — lush, grand-opera-style events — but with the added dissonance of expressionism, an impulse that eventually got so much the better

APOLOGY

The photographer whose exhibition *Work Stations: Office Life in London* was reviewed last week is Anna Fox, and not Susan Fox as stated in our headline. Sorry.

of him that he became a dead end to future development. Bintley now most often turns to the wide New World 20th-centuryism of Balanchine; several recent pieces, *Allegri* and *Galanteries* among them, are obvious tributes, whatever he may say, in style and pure dance leanings.

Good sense, however, is not enough. Bintley has yet to find a distinctive personality. For all his warmings to the complexity and density of artistic thinking today, he has a tendency to interpret it with a sort of brittle fussiness and, in some important aspects, his choreographic mind remains tight, closed to the challenge of the subversive or extreme. The restlessness of his choreography is telling. His unwillingness to let time expand, or dare hold back information, result in dances that can become more about difficult execution than dancing. (Fortunately, the RB respond to his technical demands better than the SWRB do.) An *adagio* melody yearns to sing, but can't beneath the firm beats and whole-body extravagance stuck across it. Or, when a dance has only just begun, the whole game is given away.

Bintley's choice of designers and commissioned composers is symptomatic: none is likely to do more than complement, nicely, what he has to say. He has spoken of how much he likes to keep control when he undertakes a new work.

In this respect, *Still Life at the Penguin Café* seems at first to be a step in a new and interesting direction. Hayden Griffin provides a free-fantasy dressing for it, and the score by Simon Jeffes is an unusually stripped-down choice. As for the choreographer himself, the piece presents yet one more challenge: it's in the Ashton mould of flora/fauna dances, like the domestic *Tales of Beatrix Potter* and *Pas de legumes*, but updated and magnified into a global conception, one which approaches our anxieties about endangered or extinct species. The Great Auk, who introduces the ballet, became extinct by the middle of the last century. In the Penguin Café, the Auk is a bar-girl serving drinks to a dancing clientele, some with Auk-heads, some without. Then, emerging from behind a proliferation of drops depicting Rousseauesque habitats, come the Utah Longhorn Ram, Texan Kangaroo Rat, Humboldt's Hog-nosed Skunk Flea . . . A sinister, tail-switching Southern Cape Zebra roams about the edge, while a troupe of glamorous, zebra-costumed women take the stage posturing with western sophistication — an unusually spare, effective statement for Bintley. An Amazonian-Indian family introduces human content, while Jeffe's score cleverly evokes the endless day and night of the wild land: repeated notes, an occasional *arpeggio*, not-quite cadences. Finally, after a celebratory get-together for all parties, led by a Brazilian Woolly Monkey, the deluge arrives: it's back to the Café for shelter and, two by two, into Noah's ark — a pretty, glowing tableau.

The link between endangered animals and a café is tenuous. The Great Auk was indeed the original penguin, and Bintley has selected music by the composer/director of the Penguin Café Orchestra, but mainly the connection makes for a picturesque ballet with drops, animal heads and animal characters all likely to appeal as much to youngsters as to the adults of the first night audience. Essentially, though, *Still Life* is another of those "theme" ballets in which Bintley allows his pretext to take over entirely from choreographic invention. On this account, the piece contains

some of the choreographer's most one-dimensional material, its use of the dance vernacular — step-dancing, Morris, Latin-American — left unshaped into memorable, poetic images. And it is the choreographer who must carry the responsibility: as so often with Bintley, the treatment is too flippant, too mechanical, to make you care about the content. □

TELEVISION

Death dealers

W. Stephen Gilbert

Hollywood Dreams

BBC2 Sat. 5 March

Tickets for the Titanic: Everyone a Winner

C4 Wed. 9 March

The Media Show

C4 Tues. 8 March

JEREMY ZIMMER quotes Dale Carnegie: "The smartest way to get what you want is to ask someone to do you a favour."

Jeremy Zimmer does a deal a day and each one is worth on average \$14 million. If he's under pressure, he doesn't show it, save that he compulsively twirls whatever comes to hand that can be made to twirl, especially the flex of a telephone receiver that is to his ear throughout dealing hours. He twirls *all the time*.

Jeremy Zimmer is an agent in Hollywood. But he looks like, deals like, talks like, comes on like a stockbroker. It probably helps that he's the grandson of Dore Schary, one of the old-time studio moguls. It certainly helps that he's 27, not yet too old in a young person's game.

Examples of Hollywood fauna like Jeremy Zimmer were glimpsed in their natural habitat in an incisive documentary, **Hollywood Dreams**, made by Irv Drasnin of Frontline Productions for the American Public Broadcast station WGBH Boston. Drasnin went behind the PR and the fantasy tour of the studio gateways to sample how the business of moviemaking is conducted. It was a grim glimpse. Everyone was bright with conviction, coked up on hype, except for the tyro director, still awaiting his birthright as a graduate of the University of Southern California Film School. "You need to keep meeting people," said he, "as much as you need to be talented."

The contest to win the Bullshit Oscar was intense. Mike Fenton, the leading cast director, also deals by phone: "Is that a positive Mmm or just an Mmm? . . . some of his magic *is* internal . . . he'll change his hair colour, he'll change his eyebrows, he is the complete actor . . . Steven!! (Spielberg) I have a very bizarre suggestion. Are you sitting down? Bill Cosby."

Of course, the people least connected to any kind of recognisable reality are the aspiring actors. With the studio system dead, they're out on their own, nobody overseeing their grooming, their development, their prospects. There is no continuity in the business any more. All of them just scratch their way along a greasy pole that's not even vertical. "Survival," Jeremy Zimmer explains on behalf of everyone in Tinsel Town, "is

trying not to kill too many people too quickly."

At least, on Hollywood Boulevard's pavement of stars, the established names are in the hands of their fans, "star polishers" who have adopted the stars set in the concrete and keep them gleaming. Except, interestingly enough, that named for Ronald Reagan.

British television is going the way of Hollywood. The gradual dismantling of the power of the production companies and the growth of the independent sector has thrust our industry in the direction of Hollywood's unforgiving jungle. There is little continuity of work for writers, directors or actors, little nurturing of talent on the agendas of the retreating companies. The deal is fast becoming the chief artistic enterprise.

Something of that kind of future was adumbrated in a live play by Barry Pilton, **Everyone a Winner**, made for the brief play series, *Tickets for the Titanic*, and directed with clear-eyed wit and mobile skills by Paul Joyce. "Eat, drink and be merry," quipped Jonathan Pryce's child-of-the-'60s vicar, "for tomorrow you'll be an investment analyst."

Set about a decade hence, the play posited a couple stranded in an unsympathetic future. Their suburban street was strewn with free-sheets and screaming billboards. The careers master at their children's school, before charging them handsomely for his consultation time, declared that "the latest educational research from the CBI shows that it's the practical experience of life that counts . . . We do not try to encourage children to stay on at school."

And indeed the 14-year-old twins were already committed to a future of . . . well . . . futures. "At least they're not on drugs," sighed their mother (Anna Carteret). "Probably investing in them," rejoined her husband. Actually, the play itself was rather old-fashioned, like a Clive Exton nightmare comedy of 20-25 years ago. And it's always a bit facile to play Cassandra, much harder to construct an inspirational vision of what might be achieved post-Thatcher. But at least there's still the odd one-off play with bite. You can bet there won't be any in ten years' time.

Back in Hollywood, traditional "family values" are currently all the rage, at least according to a thesis put forward in the first edition of the new weekly run of **The Media Show**. Taking as its evidence the movies *Baby Boom* (just opening in London), *Someone To Watch Over Me* and *Fatal Attraction* (already playing), the item proposed a post-Aids family image made of monogamy, vengeance and cuteness in about equal parts.

I thought a number of significant points went unmade. First, these movies are not made for the family audience, don't have general certification. Second, if *Fatal Attraction* and Ridley Scott's movies prior to *Someone* be a guide, these movies are merely meretricious, bandwagon exercises; which raises the question, can bad art be significant? The makers of *Baby Boom* came across as flaky as the clips from the *Bachelor Mother*-ish movie. And Adrian Lyne, responsible for *Fatal Attraction*, revealed the quality of thinking that lay behind that nasty piece of exploitation: "Obviously the whole conflict of the career woman with career on the one side and the prospect of being a mother on the other and making them work together is a complicated issue. I don't pretend to understand . . . I guess we are very different, the sexes." □

Old chestnut

Jeremy Bugler, Editor, Weekend World, London Weekend Television

I was saddened, though not altogether surprised, to see that the NS was repeating some old chestnuts about *Weekend World* (Diary 11 March).

Whatever may have been the practice in the past, can I make clear our current practice on *Weekend World*? Interviewees are not told what to say, and dropped from the show if they don't oblige. The scripts reflect their actual views and the bad old game, known as "bashing the pundit", is forbidden on *Weekend World*.

Yes, of course the programme is pre-scripted before shooting starts. It is insane to go filming a current affairs programme without a clear idea of what you are trying to say. (If you find you didn't ask a key question when you were filming, you've lost your chance. You can't, as a print journalist can, ring up later and say "Oh, I forgot to ask you about. . .".)

These pre-scripts are based not on the producer's prejudices but on what the interviewees have said to the programme's researchers in preliminary off-camera interviews. The interviewees are simply asked to repeat their views on camera.

Grown up

Nicolas Walter, Rationalist Press Association, London N1

Francis Wheen (NS 11 March) rightly criticises the Church of England report recommending that the common law of blasphemy which now protects only the Anglican religion should be replaced by a statute law which would protect all religions from being insulted or outraged. This seems liberal but is indeed high illiberal. A couple of points may be added to his criticisms.

The legal definition of religion may be difficult but is not impossible. The English courts have decided that it must involve the worship of a supernatural being, and this has already been used to exclude Scientology and ethical humanism from the legal privileges of religion, but of course it includes plenty of thoroughly objectionable organisations.

As for humanists and rationalists, most of us certainly don't want either to be classed with the religions or to have our beliefs legally protected. Our humanism or rationalism is based on the rejection of religion, and we are quite grown up enough to take the insults and outrage we are used to in this Christian country.

Karate as a way of life

Lyn Barlow, New Statesman

Yvonne Roberts (NS 4 March) not only failed to prove a link between violent crime and the martial arts, she also displayed her total ignorance in respect of what the martial arts are fundamentally about. She quoted details from a number of violent murders, one of which was committed by a man who had been a martial arts student.

Although martial arts in Britain have become somewhat "tailored" to western expectations, i.e. increasingly competitive, it still, in all its forms, teaches students that to resort to violence as a means of resolving something is a weakness.

Humility, self-control and respect for life is at the centre of all martial arts teaching. In a *dojo* (gym), when a student behaves in a negative/abusive way the individual concerned loses the respect of his/her fellow students. Showing off, arrogance, not pulling punches and such acts are usually picked up on and checked by most "bona fide" instructors. For many martial arts students in Britain karate is seen not only as studying specific movements and techniques but also as a means of improving one's character and training one's mind in a journey, of sorts. This perception of karate, in particular, is displayed most clearly in the universal respect awarded to such figures as Sensei Kanazawa, who has built up a huge loyal following because his teaching is not only physical but moral and spiritual.



On the periphery of martial arts, as in everything, there are cowboys/entrepreneurs cashing in, making money out of something that is fundamentally good. It is because of the growing concern to stop this that martial arts magazines such as *Black Belt* have a policy of not publishing advertisements for "so-called" martial arts accessories of a dubious nature.

As someone who believes totally in non-violence not only as theory but as a way of life I find no contradiction in being a karate student.

Michael R Kemshall, Lincoln

Why don't the rest of us take up Aikido, Ti Chi etc., in the same way that some of the suffragettes took up Ju-jitsu to protect themselves from the sexist bully boys eighty years ago?

Behaving like Tories

Patrick Curry, London W14

I am glad that my article on the Tower Hamlets Liberals (NS 11 Dec.) has got through to Eric Flounders. He gives some heartening statistics about progress in TH: better services, more funds allocated to housing, decentralisation, and so on (Letters, 4 March). That is good news, and I applaud it. There's just one problem: none of these points addresses the simple one I originally made, namely that the TH Council has consistently and aggressively pursued housing policies that are racist in their effects. Thus, Flounders forgets to

mention that the families he describes as "intentionally homeless" were part of a legal test case, pioneered by TH Liberals, to establish a precedent using (to quote another Liberal critic, this time from leafy Liverpool) "housing law as immigration control through enforced repatriation." (They cannot claim ignorance, since the United Kingdom Immigrants' Advisory Service has made the consequences quite clear.) The same precedent has also effectively denied the right of family unity to ethnic minorities. Still, Flounders does at least admit the cuts to what I called "an array of groups", obviously not all voluntary but all clearly concerned to combat racism.

I also argued that this effective racism was part of a larger pattern, namely populism. Flounders unwittingly confirms this with his peculiar justification for cuts to the Half Moon Theatre (which he would presumably also apply to savaging the Whitechapel Art Gallery and National Museum of Labour History) — namely, that none of his local constituents objected. As long as those hit constitute a minority (blacks or Asians, the arts, universities) anything goes. Oh, and you can call it "radical"!

Given his grasp of this strategy and talent for vituperation, Flounders could go far: perhaps the Norman Tebbit of the SLDP. But it won't be as easy to use the maverick TH Liberals as before, when they didn't even bother to affiliate to the national party. One of the silver linings of the new party is a strong central organisation and a constitution with (some) teeth. And if I and other democrats who know a principle when we see one can put on pressure when it's needed, he can rest assured we will. (As for sympathy for those fighting in a Labour stronghold, which some colleagues have chided me for lacking — is that an excuse to behave like Tories? Simon Hughes seems to have won and held his inner-city London seat with a very different set of values and ideas.)

1688 in Exeter

John Lloyd, Chair, Marketing & Promotions, Civic Centre, Exeter

May I add some points to balance your report about the Anglo-Dutch events in Exeter later this year (NS 19 Feb.)?

Exeter citizens in 1688 cheered the arrival of William and Mary as relief from the Bloody Assizes of Judge Jefferies who had hanged so many local radicals in the reign of James II. We are not going to have our local history hijacked by a group of bigots who adopted the name of Orange a hundred years later. There is no connection in time or place between our events and the Orange Order march. Even if we were to cancel all tomorrow, they would still persist. We are organising a Bill of Rights Conference chaired by Lord Scarman which will be anathema to the Orange Order and their National Front allies.

As a Labour-led council (not a coalition) we have in four years trebled the house-building programme, doubled the repairs programme and created more than 2,000 new jobs. The Anglo-Dutch events will bring in thousands of Dutch tourists which will, as part of our promotion programme, create yet more jobs. Add to this the fact that the flower shows and exhibitions and lectures and concerts will also be for the

entertainment and enlightenment of local people and you get very good value for money.

National Assistance Boards

A former NAB employee

Your editorial (NS 4 Feb.) about the National Assistance Board cannot pass unchallenged. It conjures up a vision of bureaucrats sitting on thrones dispensing benefits arbitrarily and capriciously to their favourites, with Durham miners and London "toughies" as "supplicants" — (do you mean "supplicants" as in "humble petitioners", OED?). The only "power" the officers had, hedged in as they were by strict rules and regulations and subject to constant checks and audits, was to make sure that need was met in accordance with the statutory provisions then in force. The old NAB may not have been loved, but hated it certainly was not — it was too useful. "Corrupting" is an insult.

Trivial TV

Giles Gordon, London NW5

Like everyone else, I'm sorry to see the departure of Hugo Williams as your television columnist. However, wouldn't it be appropriate to replace him with someone who takes the medium of television seriously? Personally, I think it's fruitful, although my children say I love it.

But the fact is, give or take Christopher Dunkley and Sean Day-Lewis, no one writes about it on a regular basis in this country on the assumption that it is, whether we like it, the most influential means of communication we have.

No one, in the national press, regularly analyses the effect of television on our lives, its influence upon our society. What has happened, for instance, to a society that prefers those inane gigglers on TVam to the sober and sagacious Sally Magnusson and especially, Jeremy Paxman on *Breakfast Time*; and so on throughout the day.

There must be a writer around as witty as Hugo Williams who cares passionately about television as a medium, as a means of influence and indoctrination. Or are we right to despise it and write it off as, in the main, trivial, cynical and irredeemable?

Gobbledegook

David Green, Gorebridge, Midlothian

I was saddened to read Francis Wheen's derogatory piece on the Maharshi Mahesh Yogi's enlightened scheme (NS 4 March). "His Holiness" is obviously a very easy target for press sarcasm, and receives many such attacks from the tabloids, lumping him with the Moonies et al. I would like to think that the *New Statesman* is above this kind of pettiness.

I am not involved with the Government of the Age of Enlightenment myself, but I have many

friends who are, and although at first glance it might be possible to over-generalise and call these people renegades of the late '60s far-out culture, I can assure you that behind all the printed gobbledegook there is a serious commitment to changing the runaway consumerism of the world. If Francis Wheen cared to enquire a little more deeply, I'm sure he would overcome many of his prejudices.

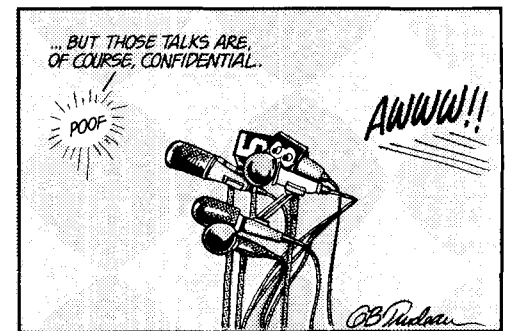
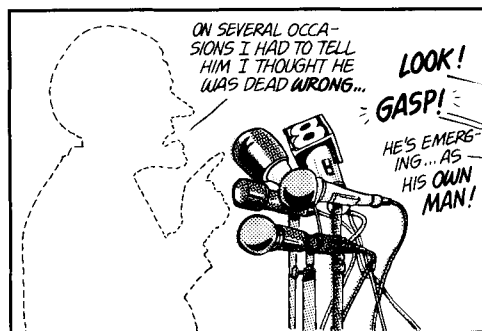
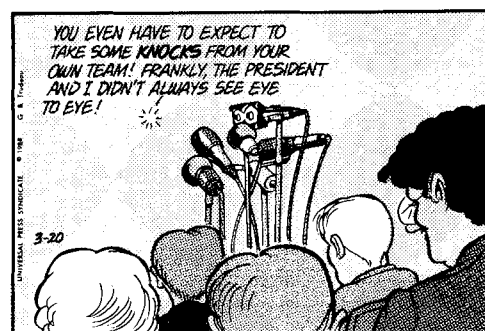
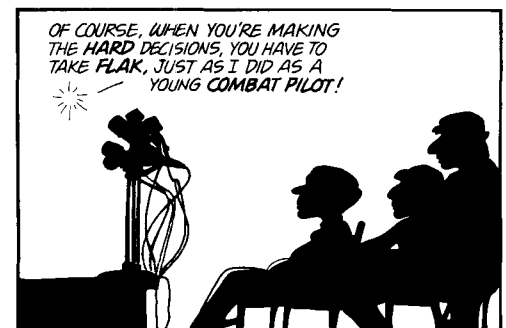
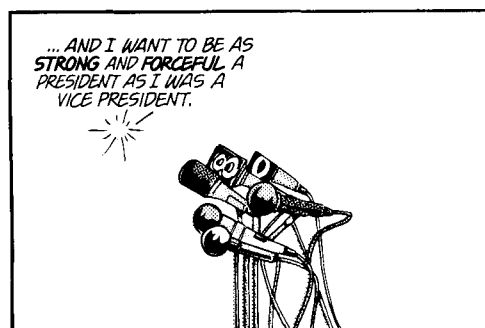
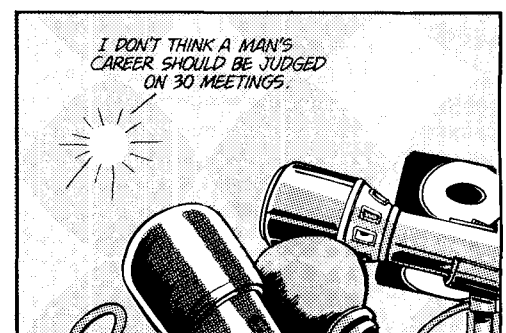
Unified Training Programme

Pat Ainley, London E15

So Molly Meacher thinks "the rationale behind the government's new adult training programme is sound" (NS 26 Feb.). Perhaps she would not appreciate it so much if she were actually unemployed herself and forced into going on it, instead of being employed by an organisation that is supposed to represent the interests of the unemployed.

As is widely recognised, the new Unified Training Programme moves another step nearer towards the compulsory labour of workfare. Clause 25 of the new Employment Act allows the Secretary of State to define training programme participants as either "employed" or "non employed", thus allowing schemes to be run at benefit levels whenever he should wish.

As it is, £10 to £15 on top of benefits for a full week's work marks a further reduction in the old Community Programme rate for the job (set at £65



a week in 1982, a drop from nearly £100 a week previously) which, since it was not exceeded, was only for part-time work. There is of course still no substantial training involved.

The Unified Programme in fact shows just how little the renamed Training Commission now has to do with training of any sort and how much to do with work for benefit, as in compulsory YTS. This has happened just when vocationalism is also finally finished in schools and colleges. For Baker's Bill will soon swing the education system back towards traditional, academic pursuit of test success rather than all the work-relevant rubbish we have heard so much about since 1976.

For anyone who is interested in this new situation for schools and schemes, a conference at London University's Goldsmiths' College on 26 March seeks to bring together people who work with young people on both sides of the education/training divide, and even some young people themselves, to discuss "Baker and the Training Commission" and what can be done about them.

The merger

Adrian Colwell, Wakefield

While I understand the commercial pressure to merge the two magazines, I hope that certain features of the excellent *New Statesman* magazine

remain intact and continue into the new magazine.

In particular, I find the Ben Pimlott column challenging and consistently interesting. Likewise the Edward Pearce and John Lloyd columns. I enjoy the syndicated articles, particularly those from *The Nation*. I would hope that the new magazine will continue to print articles from Noam Chomsky and Alexander Cockburn, whose analysis of the American state and society is very *perceptive*. Please ensure that the new magazine contains a weekly column concerned with American affairs and also a regular column on developments in Europe.

Finally, I would like to wish the new magazine well, hope it flourishes and maintains the high standards of the *New Statesman* magazine.

Breaking the barriers

Jonathan Danilowitz, Tel Aviv, Israel

Jeremy Younger's story (NS 26 Feb.) fascinated me. I had somehow always believed that Judaic law had a "monopoly" on anti-gay bias.

I would like to thank him for coming out so bravely and proudly and for standing up and fighting for his convictions. Gay men and women have so few positive role-models, while heterosexuals never get to discover homosexuals because they never "see" them. Younger has

helped to break down the barrier, and it can't have been easy.

Irish figures

Francis Rowan, Portmarnock, Co. Dublin

Alexander Cockburn complains (NS 4 March) that in the University of Wisconsin, of 43,369 students only 2,400 (or 5.5 per cent) are drawn from ethnic minorities. According to the 1980 census, the population of Wisconsin was 4,700,000 of which 4.4 per cent or 209,000 (including 29,000 native American Indians) were from ethnic minorities. The minorities are seemingly over-represented by 25 per cent and 480 should be immediately expelled in the interest of equality.

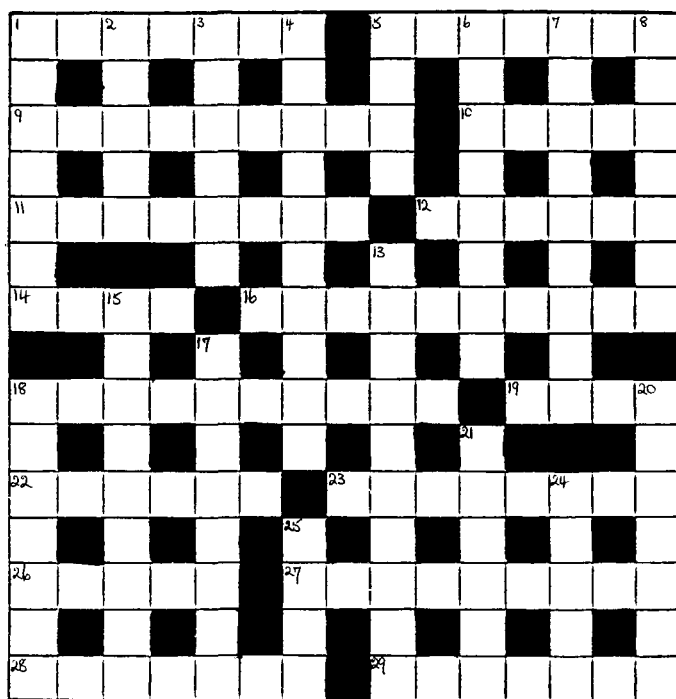
Deaf conference

E. Dixon, Putney

I am deaf and have exciting news to share with your readers. I am helping to organise a conference for deaf students from all over Europe to share their experiences in achieving their goals in life and to exchange ideas on working towards an integrated society. The conference is to be held from 6-8 July and further details are available from The Conference Organiser, Deaf-fax Trust, c/o Bullmershe College of Higher Education, Woodlands Avenue, Earley, Berks RG6 1HY.

Weekend Crossword 1589

PRIZES: £5 Book Tokens for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1589, New Statesman, Foundation House, Perseverance Works, 38 Kingsland Road, London E2 8DQ by first post 5 April.



ACROSS

1. Prepare something for a picnic in Spencer's place (7)
5. Leg protection for old footballer (7)
9. It is an unimportant matter but the team is to take it to court (9)
10. Beating often felt by hands (5)
11. Place of departure gives publicity to the journey (8)
12. Physical discomfort experienced when goddess goes outside an area of London (6)
14. Pip's feminine companion (4)
16. Debating whether to make a girl perform without swearing (10)
18. Aggressive persons who have a terrible row with Germans (10)
19. Being caught with this amount would be inexpensive (4)
22. Try again because there is a different setter (6)
23. Scout who has to be involved with Rovers (8)
26. If the mistake were pointless, there would be nothing in school subjects (5)
27. Something to wear gives a man somewhere to live (9)
28. Made progress in majority backing for structural feature (7)
29. Girl who turns the French so crazy (7)

DOWN

1. Downfall of a rotter in a suit (7)
2. In bed the demand would be limited (5)
3. Raises one among large numbers (5)
4. Doubts of a young lady about making a donation (10)
5. Colour in which you go up to a king (4)
6. Points journalists love when having a drink (8)

7. Saint who spends a part of the Church year in a plant (9)
8. Building in which a woman goes on strike (7)
13. A number put up, it may be seen at the ground (10)
15. Delays which are relative with one following the speaker inside (9)
17. Styles of shaving are certainly included in fashions (8)
18. Most amorous people in our part of the world are about to take precautions (7)
20. Old man followed by suns needs protection from rays (7)
21. Old woman wrongly blamed (6)
24. Compete with Gilbert to express opinions (5)
25. Bogus contents of Christmas hamper (4)

SET SQUARE

Solution to 1587

P	H	I	L	A	N	T	H	R	O	P	I	C	A	L
R	N	N	E	E	R	L	I							
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Weekend competition

No 3017

Set by Gray Dorn

Or, to be honest, originally set by one Eric Stockdale (where are you now?) in April 1968, and well worth reviving. There is, or was then, a vogue for epigrammatic reviews, as in "No Leica" for *I Am a Camera*, "Twice as good as 8½" for the Danish film *Seventeen* or, for *Ben Hur*, "Loved Ben, hated Hur". Some contemporary epigrammatic reviews please, of books, films and plays only, for Wednesday 30 March.

No 3014

Set by Russell Lucas

Extracts from a prospectus floating the Royal Family as a public company.

Report

By Gray Dorn

A mere 29 entries this week, which I fear indicated just how boring the topic was: too many Royals comps recently, too many privatisation comps. I'm sorry, we've had a lot on our minds what with the merger and everything. The problem is that it's my job to introduce political elements into the comps, to compensate for the petit-bourgeois literary/whimsical tendencies of de Meaner *et al*. But for the last few days all I've been coming up with is unacceptable and humourless stuff like, "give reasons why killing 3 unarmed Israeli civilians is an atrocity whereas killing 85 unarmed Palestinian civilians isn't" or "write a heroic ode to the brave lads who ambushed and gunned down three unarmed Provos in Gibraltar" — I guess I'm just getting jaded. Anyway, that explains the Royals even if it doesn't excuse them. Those below made the best of a bad job and get the usual generous £12.

Appendix 5 para. 4:

...the Queen's Corgis are to be privatised separately from one another to promote greater competition between them. Henceforth they shall be known as Regional Corgi Residuary Bodies and they shall in time be put out to private tender.

All dogs involved will be encouraged to buy shares in themselves, thus becoming part of the wider share-owning democracy. Indeed it is this Government's proud claim that since coming to power, more canines have become shareholders than have become union members.

The advantage of all this to the dogs is that they will, in the fullness of time, become leaner, fitter, faster, more productive animals; free from the flab of state ownership. They will, in fact, become Greyhounds.

The advantage to the British Consumer is, of course, obvious.

PAUL HUMBER

...The traditional logo will continue to appear on carefully selected products, such as theatre programmes and cigarette packets, to maintain the company's quality market profile. However, a new logo (designed by Fluck and Law) for use on popular merchandise will spearhead a much more aggressively profit-related franchising policy. With the baseline product — constitutional stability — set to continue its slide, further assimilation into the entertainment industry is the likeliest option, with TV spin-offs an exciting possibility. The competition required under the Royalty Act is currently open to tender, and any new Royal Family will not be in place until the mid-90s, by which time Windsor plc will have built up a commanding market lead. Royals are a totally self-renewing resource, and recent experiments with fast breeders will ensure a bright future well into the 21st century.

PETER NORMAN

Applications are invited for shares in *House of Windsor plc*, a group whose main interests are in property, the media and the turf. It has five semi-autonomous subsidiaries:

The Real Goods plc is led by a wife and husband team. Known by its corgi and tweeds logo, this company generates tremendous interest among the punters.

The Queen Mother plc still has tremendous client potential despite ageing stock.

Wales & Co is expected eventually to become the lead company within the group. With interests in pop music, wholefoods and architecture, the company attracts considerable interest from market commentators.

Yorkie & Ferg plc plans a sustained period of growth later this year.

After an uncertain start, *Really Useful Edward plc* has developed theatrical interests. Profits are not guaranteed in the first year.

The Princess Royal plc is not part of this Offer for Sale.

BRIAN RUTH

This unique offer involves the simultaneous flotation of the well-established Crown Revenues (CR) family holding company, and a chance to buy into the hitherto publicly owned Royal Activities and Prerogatives (RAP).

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wide range of services including Royal handshakes, audiences, commissions in the armed services and honours additional to those already on sale.

A carefully modulated programme of mild eccentricity, tasteful scandal and phased fecundity will ensure that shareholders enjoy all the benefits of a zero marketing budget.

Certain non-profitable activities will be discontinued. We are negotiating with British Air-Rover for the sale of Princess Margaret, the Commonwealth and the residual CRAP interest in the Church of England.

JONATHAN SLEIGH

Announcing the sale of more than a millenium: a chance to share in the company that gave you Shakespeare's history plays, the Act of Union and *Edward and Mrs Simpson*.

We are proud to announce the public sale of shares in *Majesty Enterprises*. This company, with its valuable international connections, has a controlling interest not only in a number of former colonies, but also a major rock group (remember *Bohemian Rhapsody*?) and the national postal service. A wide variety of public houses bears witness to its powerful business potential.

A busy portfolio has enabled this company to run such money-spinning enterprises as the Church of England Synod, the State Opening of Parliament, and most national newspapers (for which it provides more copy than Reuter's).

Now you too have the chance to run your own government, appropriate treasure troves and rare fish, buy into Barbara Cartland, and select the final items on *News At Ten*.

Majesty. To crown your investments.

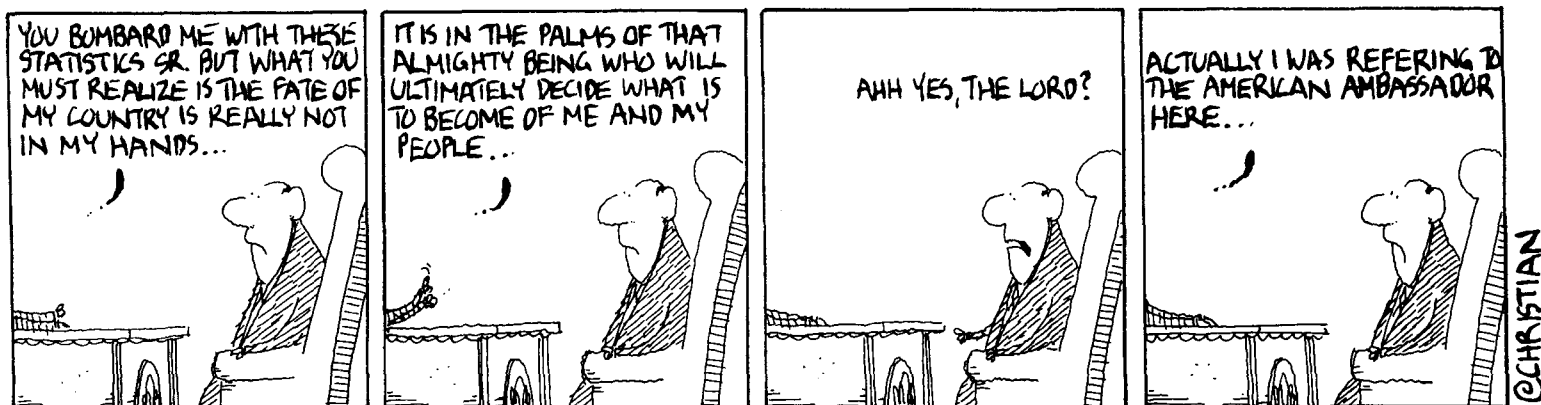
WILL BELLINGER

Performance reports and growth projections of products of private companies now amalgamating to form UNIROYAL PLC.

Print-Cess M: Its absolute fidelity in reproducing whatever material it is fed makes this the most reliable copier on the market. Its loudness in operation and brash, vulgar lines are more than outweighed by its durability and total insensitivity to atmospheric pressures that would normally disrupt more fastidious mechanisms.

The "Fergie": Built on generous aerodynamic lines, this all-purpose vehicle will, we confidently predict, be to the '90s what the "Mini" was to the '60s. Everyone will want to test-drive a "Fergie". With the prototype, very many chancers did; but this somewhat spluttery and erratic early model is now being replaced by a more sedate — and even more capacious — family saloon. Regular annual production is assured; and even when the assembly lines cease rolling, no one will want to scrap their "Fergie" — cantankerous old banger though she may then have become.

JONATHAN FERNSIDE



Chess

WINNING is not all that counts. If at all possible, one wants to do it in decorative style too. Without question the grandest of all ornaments is a Queen sacrifice. However, there is room for differences of opinion over which type of Queen-sacrifice exhibits the highest form of chess artistry. The "pretty" sacrifices of "brilliant" games usually owe their visual appeal to a tactical point that can be seen quite easily. So such sacrifices involve little or no risk, and one might complain that to admire them is to admire what is superficial in a sacrifice. For once the forcing process has been grasped, the sacrifice becomes the safest of investments, leading inevitably to mate or material gain.

Stronger players are more likely to be impressed by a positional Queen sacrifice. You will find an illustration of the contrast between the two kinds of sacrifice in *Diagram A* from **Rohde-Kogan, US Championship 1986**. Is this a case in which Michael Rohde played what should have been a tactical sac on positional grounds? The game continued: 24. Be6! Nxe3 25. Rxe3 + Kh8 26. Bxf7 The forcing process continues with a threat of mate by Rg8 +. h5 27. fxe3!? An annotator in *Informator* queried this move and gave a variation which seems to win by force: 27. Bg8 Rxe3 28. Rxe3 + Kh7 29. R1g7 + Kh6 30. Rg6 + Kh7 31. f6 Nf5 32. f7 and the threat of f8 = N mate forces Black to surrender his Q with 32... Qe7. Now, if that really were all forced we would be dealing with

a purely tactical sacrifice. In fact, 24. Be6 would just be a way of winning the exchange. However, the player saw more than the annotator — Rohde abstained from 27. Bg8 because Black has the effective reply 27... Qg4!. Qf2 28. Bd5 e4? Not the best defence. How is White to win, if at all, after 28... c6! 29. R7g5 Qe2? Admittedly, there is not much risk here since there is a draw in hand with 30. Rg6 Kh7 31. Rg7 + etc. 29. Bxe4 Qxe3 30. Bxb7 Rf8 31. R7g5 Qh3 32. f6! 1-0. If 32... Rxf6 33. Rg8 + Kh7 34. Be4 + decides.

Perhaps it is unfair to tactical sacs to claim that the positional variety are superior because they involve a risk. When the side with the Queen lacks counterplay the risks involved may be negligible, as in *Diagram B* from **Larsen-Chandler, Hastings 1987-8**:

17... Nc7 18. Bd5 + Kh8 19. Qxa8! Nxa8 20. Rxa8 Bh6 After the game Larsen said that 20... Qe7 would have been a better defence. But one can see that in any case White has a very secure formation, whereas Black's pawn advances have left wide avenues open in his first 3 ranks. 21. Ndf3 Qe7 22. Bxb7! Bd7 Or 22... Bxb7 23. Rxb7! 23. Rxe8 + Bxe8 24. Bd5 Qd6 25. Rb7 g5 26. h4 gxf4 27. Nxf4 Bd7 28. Nef3 f4 Black is trying to get his Bishop to e3. 29. Be4 fxe3 30. fxe3 Be3 + 31. Kg2 Bg4 At last he has some sort of play against the White King's castle, but at a ruinous cost. 32. Rxf7 + Kg8 33. Rb7 Qa6 34. Nxe5 Be6 35. Re7 Kf8 36. Nhg6 + Kg8 37. Rxe6 Qa2 Since 37... Qxe6 38. Bd5 is obviously hopeless, Black challenges White to do his worst. 38. Re8 + Kg7 39.

Re7 + Kh6 40. Ng4 + Kh5 41. Re5 + Bg5 42. Nf4 + Kxg4 43. Bf3 mate 1-0.

Black had a harder decision to make in *Diagram C*, from **Lev-Gelfand, European Junior Ch, Arnhem 1987-8**.

18. Bg5 Bxb3! Very fine judgement — and highly imaginative too, given that most people would have settled for 18... f6 19. exf6 Re8 +. 19. Bxd8 Rbxd8 20. Qc3 Bxe5 21. Qxb3 Rfe8! A pleasant try that threatens 22... Bg3 mate. 22. Bd3 Bxa1 + 23. Be4 Bd4 24. Kf1 Ne5 25. g3 Nc4 26. Kg2 Ne3 + 27. Kh3 A flight to safety? Re5 28. g4 h5! Black's initiative pursues him to the edge. White now opts to go down fighting, perhaps seeing that after 29. gxf5 Rxf5 + 30. Kg3 Rg5 + 31. Kh4 (31. Kf2 Rg2 +, 31. Kf4 Rg2) Rg2 32. Kh3 Rb2 33. Qd3 Kg7 he is defenceless in any case. 29. Bxg6 hxe4 + 30. Kg3 Nc4 31. Be4 gxf3 32. Qxf3 f5 33. Qh5 f4 + 0-1.

Diagram A: Rohde-Kogan

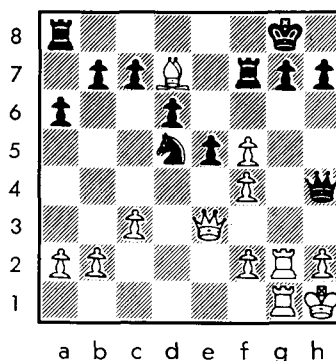


Diagram B: Larsen-Chandler

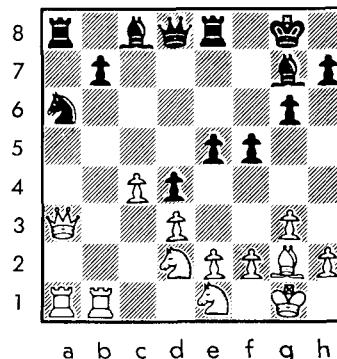
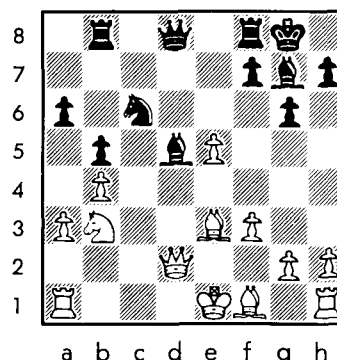


Diagram C: Lev-Gelfand



Solution to last week's position: (4n2k/3K3p/6PN/5N1n/32) V. Evreinov (1978): 1. g7 + N (either) xg7 2. Nf7 + Kg8 3. N5h6 + Kf8 4. Ng5! Nf6 + 5. Kd8 — the perfect zugzwang.

George Botterill

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This England

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□ Not many people know this... but there's only one qualified ostrich feather curler in Britain. And that's bad news for our ambassadors. For she's far too busy concocting bizarre headgear for drag stars like Danny La Rue to bother with orders for new official plume titfers. It means our men in far-flung outposts of the world are often forced to fly the flag wearing borrowed hats, says Derek Hand, the man who supplies them. — *The Star* (George Moor)

□ The gas lights have gone out in Maryport, Cumbria. Mr Derek Henderson, aged 29, was paid £2 a week to service 17 gas lamps near the harbour

area of the town. He has decided to quit after being told that his unemployment benefit would be reduced. The lights are likely to stay out because Mr Henderson was the only man in the town qualified to maintain the mantles and lanterns. — *The Times* (Leonard Cox)

□ MP Teddy Taylor took one look at the huge pile of pro-hanging coupons in the Star's London office yesterday and said: "It is wonderful to see so much sincere support." — *The Star* (Russell Holmes)

□ A doctor who was dressed as a crow when arrested for drink driving was ordered to be struck off by the Professional Conduct Committee of the General Medical Council yesterday. — *Daily Telegraph* (James Scott)



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